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# IN THESE TIMES

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**Nelson Mandela**

# Free at last!

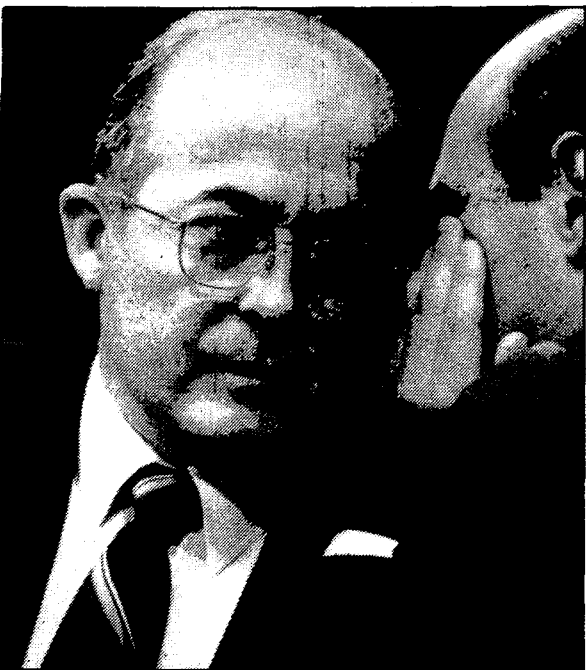


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**COVERAGE BEGINS ON PAGE 7**



# The king and I: Poindexter on trial



Former National Security Adviser Adm. John Poindexter consults with his attorney, Richard Beckler, during the Iran-contra hearings.

By John P. Clyne

WASHINGTON

The upcoming trial of former National Security Adviser John Poindexter, scheduled to begin March 5, illustrates the degree to which the national security policymaking apparatus has obscured the assumptions behind the Constitution and escaped all but the most flimsy checks and balances.

During testimony before the Iran-contra committees in 1987, Poindexter played the foil for the "diversion" diversion. The White House and a complicit Congress arbitrarily decided that the crucial issue at the hearings was whether or not President Ronald Reagan had knowledge of the details of the transfer of profits from the arms sales to Iran to the contras. Oliver North brought everyone to the edge of their seats with his "good soldier" performance. Poindexter ended the phony drama by insisting that "on this whole issue, the buck stops here with me." He made the committee members the butt of an intelligence tradecraft primer, testifying that he deliberately "provided the president some deniability" by not telling him about the diversion and then exercising that deniability on the willing dupes posing as inquisitors.

Outside of the diversion, Poindexter cloaked himself in

patriotism and civil service, insisting that Reagan had approved—or "would have approved, if he knew"—of Poindexter's actions in support of the contras. As Poindexter viewed the situation, "the president's policy with regard to support for the contras had not changed since 1981"; he merely sought to serve Reagan by coordinating assistance to the contras in defiance of the Boland Amendment.

**On bended knee:** As things stand, Reagan will get a chance to testify to his subordinate's loyalty. In a February 5 decision, presiding judge Harold Greene ordered the former president to give a videotaped deposition for use at the trial. That order followed a decision by Greene to force Reagan to surrender excerpts from his personal diaries. Reagan's attorney's have claimed that executive privilege overshadows Poindexter's right to have the diaries as evidence. Greene is expected to rule on that claim by next month. If he rules against Reagan, his lawyers may delay the trial by seeking an immediate appeal. All this "ordering" of an ex-president by a district court judge smacks of the accountability that marks a genuinely democratic government. Relatively speaking, Greene has shown minimal deference to Reagan. By the standards of the framers of the Constitution, however, he is on one knee before the king.

In his opinion, Greene cited *U.S. vs. Burr*, the treason trial of Vice President Aaron Burr in 1807. Burr's lawyers sought testimony and letters from President Thomas Jefferson. Justice John Marshall insisted that "there is no exception whatever" to the accused's right to compel witnesses in his own defense, "and it is not known ever to have been doubted, but that the chief magistrate of a state might be served with a subpoena *ad testificandum*." Burr needed the letters more than anything else, and Jefferson did not appear in person.

Nor did Richard Nixon appear at the trials of his Watergate co-conspirators, although he was served with a subpoena to testify at the trials of John Mitchell, John Ehrlichmann and H.R. Halderman. The subpoena was upheld by the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court, but Nixon fell ill and the trials proceeded without him.

At a hearing on the Reagan subpoena, Poindexter's lawyers carefully distinguished between Nixon's illness and the law upholding the compulsion of his testimony. Further, they argued, the precedent set by the videotaped testimony of Presidents Ford and Carter in two separate trials did not apply because their testimony was not essential, and they were sitting presidents.

Staring history in the face, Judge Greene blinked. Confronted by a difficult choice, he punted to modern technology. Greene declined to make Reagan the first president to appear in person, ruling that videotape would permit him to consult with his attorneys and protect privileged information.

Greene missed Marshall's spirit. Earlier in the *Burr* opinion, Marshall compared the presidency to the throne of England. Under British law, the king may not be wrong, yet the American president may be impeached and removed from office. Further, noted Marshall, "the monarch may never be a subject," while the president is elected and at the end of his service "returns to the mass of the people again." Yet Greene ought not be judged harshly. He and Independent Counsel Lawrence Walsh are in what former CIA officer David MacMichael calls "a genuinely impossible situation" between the intelligence agencies and the needs of justice because of the Classified Information Procedures Act (CIPA).

**Playing Bush's ace:** CIPA ostensibly balances the interests of law enforcement with the need to protect "national security." Defendants must make a pretrial disclosure of all the classified information they intend to expose in their defense. An Interagency Review Board, comprised of the heads of all federal intelligence agencies negotiates with attorneys over what may be revealed, based on the judge's view of what is necessary for a trial. In case of disputes, the judge may take various sanctions against either side, ruling against the defense on questions of materiality, or dismissing the indictments if the government is not forthcoming. Unfortunately, CIPA assumes that dismissal is a "sanction" against the government.

The executive's ace in the hole is CIPA section 6(e), under which the attorney general may, at any time, file

an affidavit asserting that classified material at issue may not be revealed under any circumstances. The judge is then forced to proceed without it, even if it means dismissing the indictment. The section destroys the notion of dispensed power essential to accountable government: a politically appointed adviser to the president has absolute power to obstruct the prosecution of intelligence officers serving the same president.

In a September 18 report to the House Intelligence Committee, Walsh noted that CIPA allowed "the prosecution of Iran-contra defendants on some charges growing out of the coverup of misconduct, but it was nevertheless necessary to dismiss the charges central to the misconduct itself." The threat of section 6(e) forced further narrowing of the charges against Poindexter and North, plea bargains with bagmen Richard Secord and Albert Hakim and outright dismissal of charges against CIA Costa Rican Station Chief Joe Fernandez. In that case, Attorney General Richard Thornburgh filed a 6(e) affidavit preventing "disclosure" of widely publicized CIA operations in Central America.

CIPA looms over the Poindexter trial, threatening dismissal of the remaining trivial charges at any time. In his December report to Congress, Walsh wrote that the intelligence agencies' actions in the Iran-contra cases "have created an unacceptable enclave that is free from the rule of law." As the law is written now, neither an independent prosecutor nor a district judge has the power to bring high officials to justice if the administration is determined to stop a trial.

The only body with the power to do so is Congress, which has the right to impeach not only the president and vice president but "all civil officers of the U.S." But power requires the will to exercise it, and Congress isn't the least bit interested in challenging the intelligence

## INSIDE STORY

agencies. According to a House Intelligence Committee staffer, committee members "are virtually unanimous in the opinion that final control over classified information must rest with the executive."

In *Burr*, Justice Marshall wrote of the king of England "that no blame may be imputed to him, that he cannot be named in debate." Almost 200 years later, Washington, D.C., prostrate before the national security state, is afraid to name the king.

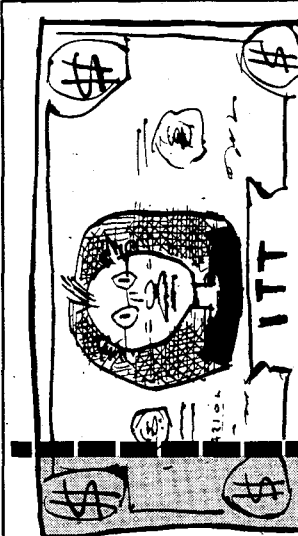
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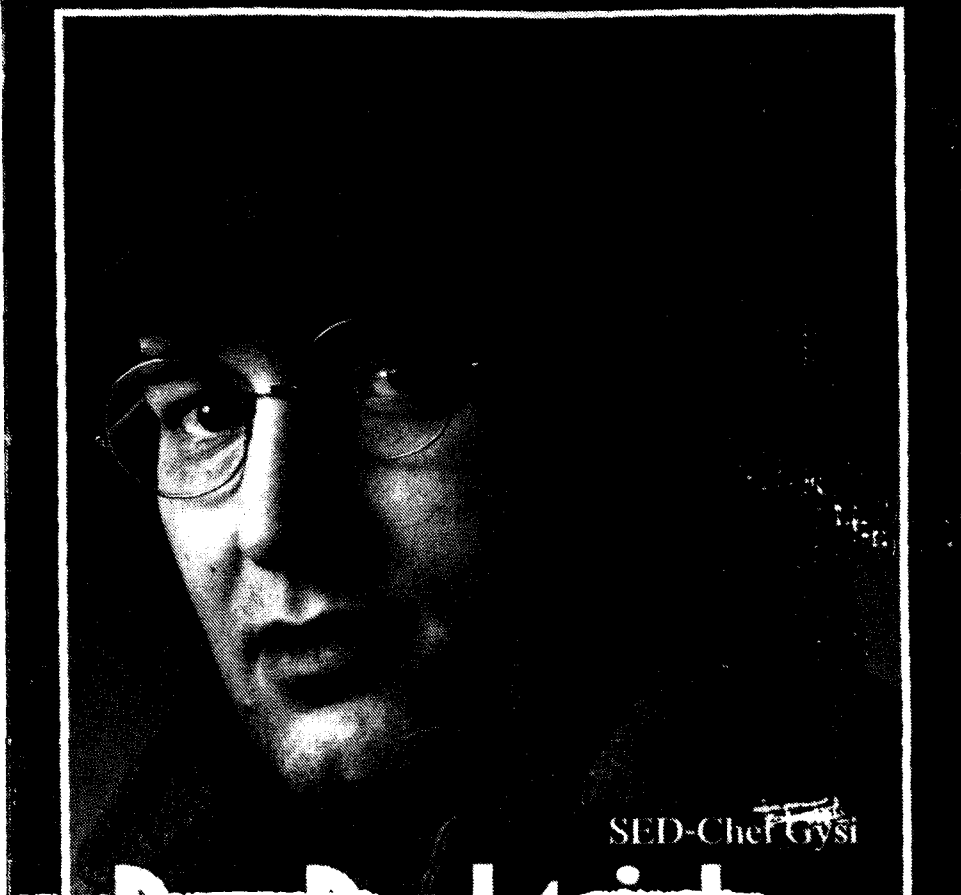
# of responses: 395  
new sustainers: 14

## A slow start

After ten days of response to our \$150,000 fund appeal, we've received \$15,752 from 395 subscribers. This is not a bad start, but it leaves us with 90 percent of our goal still to be reached. So, if you're planning to send us a check, please do it now.



# DER SPIEGEL



Gregor Gysi, head of the new Party of Democratic Socialism (formerly the Unified Socialist Party).

## German disunification on issue of reunification

By Diana Johnstone

FROM A DISTANCE IT MUST SEEM THAT THE Germans are all rejoicing at the sudden rapid rush toward unification after 40 years of division. Those who are rejoicing are in the spotlight. Those who watch in dismay, fear and bitter disappointment are mostly silent, speechless.

Two motives for misgivings about unification exist in West Germany, so different they cannot decently combine. On the one hand, there is the "kleinbürgerlich," the materialistic fear that merger with the broken-down East will quickly take the shine off West German prosperity. Economic worries are widespread enough to be respectable. "How much will it cost?" is the most common newspaper headline, as economists from the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) try to figure out the price tag of taking over the foundering German Democratic Republic (GDR).

Of a completely different nature is the anguish felt by many people on the left, both East and West. Especially unhappy are East German intellectuals who initiated opposition groups with the aim of "democratic socialism" and now see the GDR rushing headlong toward takeover by FRG capitalism.

Once East Germany's ruling Unified Socialist Party (SED) gives in, there will be hardly any way for small left opposition groups to hold off the weight of the West German economy.

**Disappearing socialist utopia:** Socialists in East Germany lack conviction or specific projects. Rolf Riesig, the new director of the Academy of Social Sciences of the GDR, said recently in Paris he hoped to see a "culture society" replace the "consumer society" in the West and "shortage society" in the East. This was his idea of a "third way" that could work in Germany.

It is very much an intellectual's dream. The GDR, with its free education, state-promoted cultural activities and serious attitude toward literature may soon be looked back on as an embryonic "culture society" compared to what lies ahead.

Some intellectuals with a nostalgia for socialist ideals have been accused of "wanting to keep the GDR as a national park for socialist utopias."

Monika Maron, a GDR writer exiled to Hamburg, recently attacked East German writers who had enthusiastically welcomed the slogan, "We are the people," but later turned on the people when they took up the reunification slogan, "We are ONE people." When the people turn out to want a better material living standard, the gap shows up between them and the writers who want to keep their Utopia at the people's expense, she said.

"Mutual contempt" between intellectuals and the people is an old German tradition, Maron said. She used to think that the worst thing was the anti-intellectualism of German workers and their patriarchally structured parties. But now that she has seen the contempt the writers have shown for the people, she thinks the writers are mostly to blame.

West German novelist Günter Grass, who was always critical of the SED regime, came to the defense of East German writers Stefan Heym and Christa Wolf. Both, he said, "are at this moment suffering frightful disappointment with their opposition to the SED. With

the breakdown of the party, a dream of theirs is also broken." Grass said he didn't think the dream of democratic socialism could be saved, but he respected people who were faithful to their ideals.

Grass is hostile to complete reunification because he thinks Germany's division is a just result of Germany's criminal war against its neighbors. For years, he has called instead for a Confederation of the two German states. "In scarcely 75 years of national unity, we filled the history books with suffering, ruins, defeats, millions of refugees, millions of dead and crimes that can never be wiped away," he reminded the Social Democratic Party Congress last December. "Cries of unity" cannot erase that past, he repeated.

Some of the polemics suggest that "the people" are a unified entity that has freely chosen capitalism. It reflects the confusion of people's natural preference for more and better consumer goods with political choice, which is something else. Rather, the choices are being narrowed before they can be clearly defined. What, for instance, of the farmers on East Germany's rural production cooperatives (LPGs), who are certainly part of "the people"? West German and European Community economists are already deciding that the LPGs cannot be integrated into EC farm policy and will have to be broken up somehow, regardless of the recognized fact the most East German farmers are quite contented with them.

**Freedom of choice?** The real cause for alarm is that things are moving so fast that "the people" have no time to choose anything. Economic processes have taken over. Of course, some 2,000 East Germans a day have been choosing to go West. Their choice limits that of the people who stay behind, as vital

services are unmanned and economic life is hobbled. But some are leaving the GDR out of panic in a snowball effect. As the economists speculate and word goes out that currency union will mean the abolition of hundreds of thousands of jobs, some East Germans figure they'd rather be unemployed in the West. More and more East Germans are letting go of their own country economically. And so it will be shaped by economic processes that they do not understand.

What is happening is a D-Mark unification, where the power of attraction of FRG economic strength does the job. This economic strength is increased by hype in the West German media.

In mid-January, the influential weekly *Der Spiegel* ran a cover story on the new SED president Gregor Gysi—the SED changed its name to Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), although the winner in newspaper *Die Tageszeitung's* contest to "rename the SED" suggested "SOS" for *Sozialismus ohne Stasi*, or socialism without the state security police. It was a shocking hatchet job clearly intended to politically kill off any would-be East German Mikhail Gorbachov.

Gysi's constructive proposals, notably on mutual disarmament, have been scarcely reported, and his past legal defense of opposition personalities quickly forgotten. What was shocking was the full gamut of veiled anti-Semitic clichés used against Gysi, who comes from a part-Jewish family. "Lies have short legs, Gysi show us yours!" was the slogan that opened the *Der Spiegel* story, stressing that Gysi was not tall and blond—like Germans—but short and dark—like guess who. The story said he is a clever lawyer; cold; intellectual; tricky; "pulling the strings" of power; motivated by filthy lucre since,

according to *Der Spiegel*, his central motive in taking over the party was not to democratize it but simply to defend its property. But the East German folk, in their righteous good sense, were seeing through Gysi's wiles.

Dr. Ludger Heid of the Salomon Ludwig Steinheim Institute for German-Jewish History wrote in protesting against the use of "classic anti-Semitic stereotypes." So did leading Greens. Günter Grass said later that he thought *Der Spiegel's* editor-in-chief Rudolf Augstein had always been a German nationalist, but it was a substantial loss for democracy that the magazine's staff was having to buckle under to his line.

The Greens are the only West German party voicing misgivings about the unification process. The French and other Western ideologues who accused the Greens—along with the whole German peace movement—of "nationalist neutralism" during the Euromissiles controversy in the '80s have since forgotten all that and are now busily expressing their understanding for German national feeling.

Green opposition to reunification is in keeping with their hostility to strong nation states. Greens are for regionalism and internationalism, as opposed to nationalism.

The contribution of the Greens and the peace movement to German nationalism is not the secret strategy imagined by French new philosophers and Telos editors, but rather a paradox: the peace and ecological movements of the '80s gave a new and less frightening identity to Germans. The new image diminished fear of German militarism in Eastern Europe, making possible a relaxation of Soviet-bloc vigilance against "German revanchism," and reunification.

**One paradox leads to another:** Having inadvertently softened up Europe for German unification by their "post-materialist" values, the West German Greens now fear being inundated by the materialist consumerism of East Germans hypnotized by the lavish shopping malls of the FRG.

But most of all, the Greens have been protesting against the "Anschluss," or "joining together," which had been disgraced by Hitler's "Anschluss" with Austria but which is unashamedly cropping up in regard to the takeover of the FRG. In the recent debate on emergency aid to the GDR, Christa Vennegerts called for more generous aid to the GDR to give East Germans time to develop their own democracy.

On February 8, the Greens acknowledged the "mad rush" toward unification, but called for a confederation rather than a single state. Spokesman Willi Hoss said Greens are calling for a constituent conference to write a new Constitution for a Confederation, rather than mere Anschluss. Green spokeswoman Antje Vollmer criticized SPD leaders for "playing with chauvinism" in the belief that it's better for them to occupy the nationalist issue than to leave it to the right."

On February 11, the new East German Green Party adopted a program for a "multicultural, non-violent society" with social solidarity and grassroots democracy. After a lively debate, the Greens rejected unification of the two German states, saying the "German question" was less pressing than aid to developing countries and an "ecological security" conference.

Greens in both German states plan to campaign for demilitarization. □



# INSHORT

By Joel Bleifuss

## Iran-contra enters the '90s

Pete Brewton of the *Houston Post* has uncovered an explosive new angle to the Iran-contra scandal. In a series of articles published this month, Brewton reports that "an eight-month investigation into the role of fraud in savings and loan failures has found numerous links between organized crime figures and CIA operatives, including some involved in gun running, drug smuggling, money laundering and covert aid to the Nicaraguan contras." According to Brewton, evidence suggests that the CIA and the Mafia can be implicated in the failure of at least 22 savings and loans, 16 of them in Texas. Of those 22, 18 "were either owned or controlled by people with links to organized crime, the CIA or both." The cost to taxpayers for covering the federally insured deposits at these 22 thrifts is estimated at \$13.1 billion. (This figure is more than double what former CIA Director George Bush proposes to spend on the Environmental Protection Agency in 1991.) Brewton further reports that evidence indicates the CIA interfered with criminal investigations of agency operatives suspected of bank fraud, thereby successfully preventing "a substantial amount of suspected fraud" from being prosecuted. In 1988, Lloyd Monroe, then an attorney with the Justice Department's organized-crime strike force, successfully prosecuted two organized crime figures for savings and loan fraud. Brewton reports that Monroe, currently a fellow at Brown University, "is convinced the CIA either masterminded or condoned a certain amount of savings and loan fraud." But Monroe says this fraud will be difficult to prove because the appropriate federal agencies "are being precluded from investigating wrongdoing that is possibly being conducted in the name of national security." He maintains that the investigation broke down because high government officials knew of the alleged CIA involvement and did not want the operation exposed. The CIA denies the charges. The agency's director for public affairs, James Greenleaf, wrote the *Post* to say, "The CIA does not violate U.S. laws and would not participate in fraudulent activities." (More on this story next week, including a tie-in to the allegations that the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign made a secret arms-for-hostages deal with the Ayatollah Khomeini to have the 52 American hostages held in Iran until after the presidential election, thereby ensuring Carter's defeat.)

## High on Mount Vernon

George Washington, in addition to being the father of our country, was a dope-growing pot-head. Like most landowners of his time, Washington planted hemp. Washington writes in his diaries how he carefully separated the female and male marijuana plants. This horticultural practice does not result in a stronger rope, however. It only preserves the psycho-active potency of the resultant sinsemilla. Consequently, if Washington, whose 258th birthday was celebrated this week, were here today cultivating marijuana in the U.S., he might well end up sentenced to a lengthy prison term. But does that fact give the drug warriors in the current administration pause to reconsider their crusade? It does not. "It's immaterial," says David Robb, spokesman for drug honcho William Bennett. "You're dealing with different times. We hold our public leaders much more accountable for their personal lives and actions than they did then. There are some things that they did that we don't morally approve of anymore. That does not diminish what they did in public life." A good point, but not the one Robb was trying to make. He continues, "The founding fathers were slave owners, but their owning slaves did not affect their contribution to the founding of our country." Does that mean Robb believes smoking marijuana is the moral equivalent to slavery? He does. "Owning slaves is certainly atrocious," says Robb. "There are similar reasons to oppose drugs. It corrupts the human spirit, erodes one's initiative. Drugs in general, marijuana to a lesser extent, enslave the addict. If there is ever such a thing as a sin, drug use is one." So what about alcohol? "Alcohol is by definition a drug," says Robb. "But our congressional mandate does not have us write policy on alcohol. I think Dr. Bennett would restrict his comments on drugs to the more addictive ones. The American public feels much more strongly about drugs. According to a Gallup poll, Americans are opposed five to one to the legalization of marijuana. As Ben Franklin said, 'When the public has spoken, it behooves the leaders of a democracy to act.'"



Paul Dalton holds an American flag while Dane Peterson burns it to protest "U.S. imperialism."

## To burn or not to burn?

OBERLIN, OHIO—When 10 Oberlin College students gathered earlier this year to protest the U.S. invasion of Panama they ignited a popular controversy.

As part of the demonstration Paul Dalton and Dane Peterson burned a U.S. flag to protest "U.S. imperialism," and subsequently wound up with the FBI on their backs.

Although FBI agent Paul Graupmann says he cannot comment on ongoing investigations, he did say, "The two men were in violation of U.S. Code Title 18, Section 700, of the Flag Protection Act, as amended by Congress in 1989. Penalties are fines of up to \$100,000 and incarceration of up to one year."

The Flag Protection Act, unlike Ohio law, does not require a witness complaint for charges to be filed. In Ohio, flag desecration is only a misdemeanor that must be reported to local police before anyone could face prosecution. No such charges were filed with the Oberlin Police Department.

Under federal law, however, the government can act as a complainant. Graupmann's investigation will be forwarded to the U.S. Attorney's office in Columbus, Ohio, and then passed on to the Justice Department in Washington, D.C.

The Flag Protection Act was amended last October without the signature of President George Bush, who petitioned Congress for an amendment to the Constitution making flag burning a crime.

The idea for a constitutional amendment, and subsequently the Flag Protection Act, was prompted

by public outcry to the U.S. Supreme Court's June 1989 ruling in the case of *Texas vs. Johnson*, striking down a Texas statute that says "a person commits an offense if he intentionally or knowingly desecrates ... a state or national flag.... '[D]esecrate' means deface, damage or otherwise physically mistreat in a way that the person knows will seriously offend one or more persons likely to observe or discover his action."

The case of the Oberlin students is very similar to the Johnson case.

"Ever since the Flag Protection Act became law, we viewed flag burning as strictly a tactic, a good tactic," Dalton says. "We were very angry at the U.S. invasion of Panama and wanted to protest it in the strongest terms possible. You could equate flag burning with the burning of draft cards during the Vietnam War. It was a symbolic protest. If we hadn't burned the flag, people wouldn't have been addressing the issue and making possible connections between what the flag stands for (in theory), and U.S. foreign policy (in practice)."

"I think that flag burning and U.S. foreign policy are part of the same problem," says Michelle Pahl of the Emergency Committee to Stop the Flag Amendment and Laws. "Besides, what is the flag a symbol of? The federal government is trying to take the politics out of it and just strictly make it a crime. Their idea is that the sovereignty or symbol of the nation overrides First Amendment rights." But judging from the response of several media sources after flags were burned in particular cities, it does seem that the "real" issues were obscured, and patriotism became the primary topic of debate, and not U.S. foreign policy.

"It depends on the context," says David Cole from the Center for Constitutional Rights. "The bulk of flag burning that took place during the Vietnam War wanted to call into question U.S. foreign policy and, along with that, clearly state that the war was unjust. In the case of Gregory Johnson [*Texas vs. Johnson*], he was protesting at the Republican National Convention their concept of a 'new patriotism.' In that case, he thought it was necessary to burn the flag as part of that very protest."

As *In These Times* goes to press the FBI is investigating six cases of flag burning. It would seem that the nature of their investigations should be centered not on whether a "crime" has been committed but on which cases stand the best chance of holding up under constitutional scrutiny. Written into the Flag Protection Act is a clause that, in certain cases, grants the right of automatic appeal to either side, all the way to the Supreme Court.

The U.S. District Court in Seattle was scheduled to hear oral arguments earlier this month in a flag burning case involving Vietnam Veterans Against the War/Anti-Imperialists. And on February 22, the first oral arguments will be heard in the Washington, D.C., flag burning that occurred after Congress passed the Flag Protection Act.

Dalton and Peterson should know the status of their case in a few weeks. "We're just being made an example," Dalton says. "I don't think they'll prosecute us, but I could be wrong. I think the FBI has been instructed to harass flag burners. We'll fight this as far as we have to. Laws that are not just need to be fought, particularly if they are unconstitutional." —Matundu Makalani



## Laying off the Pretoria hangman

No more executions in Pretoria, the hanging capital of the world? I couldn't believe my ears. With all the other breathtaking news coming from South Africa, this news took my breath away, as if for a moment I had been hanged myself.

Then a horrible thought occurred. On Fridays at dawn death comes to the condemned in South Africa: did any prisoner die the Friday morning that President F.W. de Klerk announced a moratorium on executions, never to know how close he or she was to being reprieved? It turned out none did. But South Africa has suffered an epidemic of executions lately. So many people are hanged at Pretoria Central Prison that the scaffold has seven ropes and seven trap doors, ready for seven simultaneous hangings.

Between 1983 and 1987, the Pretoria hangman executed 627 people. It took Great Britain half a century to hang a similar number. The worst year was 1987, when South Africa had the highest execution rate in the world. That year the nation of 39 million hanged 181 people—four more than were executed in Iran, 32 more than in China. The U.S. executed 25 people that year.

More than 280 people remain on Death Row in Pretoria. At least 80 of them have been convicted of political crimes. Some 97 percent of them are black.

So the news from Cape Town has come like a cleansing wind. Is it too much to hope that the winds of change in Eastern Europe, where

Romania became the latest country to abolish the death penalty, are circling the globe?

With the death penalty temporarily suspended, South Africa may indeed be moving into the sunlight and beginning to heal. While moving toward a new society, it need look only as far as its next-door neighbor and former colony, Namibia, for inspiration. On March 21, Namibia will become independent, with a multiparty system and laws based upon a bill of rights. The death penalty will be completely outlawed.

But one need not look far to see the clouds. They well up from the past. Namibia's independence comes on the 30th anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre, when hundreds of peacefully protesting blacks were gunned down by the South African police. Ironically, those early weeks of 1960 were also a time when most South Africans felt the coming of true change. Only a few weeks before Sharpeville, then-British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan had given his famous "winds of change" speech at the old Parliament House in Cape Town. Many were suffused with the hope that Nobel Peace Prize winner Albert Lutuli and his African National Congress would at last take power. Then suddenly, shockingly, they were banned, turned into criminals overnight.

Now at least this one cloud has been lifted. But others still hover over the political landscape. How long will the moratorium on hangings last? Why is apartheid still in place? Why is everybody still racially classified? Why do blacks still not have the vote? How much of the state of emergency is still in force?

Why is preventive detention still intact? Why is the judiciary still all-white? Why are newspaper and TV pictures of unrest still prohibited? In fact, how much freedom do the media actually have?

Finally, there is the darkest cloud of all. South Africa has its own deadly security forces, just as Romania did under Nicolae Ceausescu. While legal hangings in South Africa may have been halted temporarily, deaths by hanging and torture in the cells of the secret police continue.

This cloud has now touched Mandela himself. Clayton Sizwe Sithole, 20, the father of Mandela's grandchild by his daughter Zindzi, was arrested in late January as a suspected ANC guerrilla. Four days after his arrest, Sizwe's body was found hanging from a shower pipe at John Vorster Square Police Headquarters in Johannesburg.

Just as the world waits to see what de Klerk will do with Nelson Mandela, his secret police have demonstrated their power to seal the fate of the father of Mandela's grandchild.

That same week, de Klerk made a special trip to the Transvaal to meet his own newborn grandchild. Of him de Klerk said, "I think he's going to be part of a country on its way to greatness."

Earlier this month de Klerk was praised for his courage. If he truly wants his grandson to live in a country "on its way to greatness," he will have to show an uncommon kind of courage. He will have to grapple head-on with South Africa's security forces. It could be a fight to the death.

—Clive Leeman  
Pacific News Services

## New Democratic Party breaks through in Quebec

MONTREAL—Canada's New Democratic Party (NDP) scored an historic breakthrough here last week when it elected its first-ever member of parliament from Quebec. The Feb. 12 by-election was called to replace a Conservative member of parliament who resigned after being convicted of fraud and corruption. Voters in the suburban Montreal constituency gave American-born consumer advocate Phil Edmonston a landslide victory, with the social democrat polling more than 67 percent of the vote.

Edmonston, known to Canadians as "the Ralph Nader of used cars," said his win was "a victory for tolerance" that sent a message to the increasingly unpopular Conservative government in Ottawa. Federal NDP leader Audrey McLaughlin called it "a proud night for all NDPers."

Canada's third party has been strong in English-speaking Canada and has formed several provincial governments in Western provinces, but the NDP had been haunted by its failure to make inroads into Quebec to build a truly national base.

Edmonston's landslide, however, signals the first step in that process in the French-speaking province. The 45-year-old has long been comfortable with being a member of a minority. In 1968 he was the only white graduate from Bowie State College in Maryland. He immigrated to Canada in 1969, founded the Automobile Protection Association (APA) and began publishing "Lemon-aide," an annual guide to used cars. After placing second in Chambly to the Tories' Richard Grisé in the November 1988 general election, Edmonston continued to work the area, maintaining an office and a high profile.

When Grisé was forced to resign several months later, Edmonston was in the right place. He stressed his reputation for integrity as a consumer activist and distanced himself from his party's opposition to the proposed Meech Lake constitutional accord, which would—among other things—grant Quebec a "distinct society" status. His campaign seemed to falter in the final week when a former garage owner accused him of accepting \$10,000 in kickbacks from 1971 to 1977, when Edmonston was head of the Automobile Protection Association. Edmonston vigorously denied the charges, and the media controversy may have

helped him.

The Meech Lake accord may not be so easily dealt with. While opposed by the NDP and growing numbers of English-speaking Canadians, it is widely supported in Quebec. Edmonston's stand as an unqualified supporter of Meech Lake directly contradicts party policy. Although it was essential to his victory, it may cause problems at his party's caucus in Ottawa.

In Edmonston the NDP may have a future party leader as well as a Quebec member of parliament. But the NDP should not spend too much time celebrating. Edmonston readily admits his victory is more a personal one than a ringing endorsement by Quebecers of the NDP and all its policies.

As the gulf between the NDP and Quebecers over Meech Lake shows, the party has a long way to go to understand Quebec. The NDP will have to hold Edmonston's seat and win others at the next general election, expected in 1992, to prove that this by-election win is not a one-time fluke. But the hex is now broken: the Chambly victory shows that the party can attract credible candidates and mount a professional, all-out campaign in French Quebec—and win.

—Lawrence Kootnikoff

## Demagogue-induced hysteria

Last week ABC's *PrimeTime Live* featured a story by purported journalist Diane Sawyer on how Malaysia is fighting the drug war. The show's pre-publicity ad spots enticed potential viewers with this question: "In Malaysia the penalty for drug trafficking is death. Should we try it here?" Which brings to mind the scene in the movie *Drugstore Cowboy* where author William S. Burroughs, playing the part of a wayward priest, tells Matt Dillon, "Just say no to drug hysteria." In a recent issue of *Spin* magazine, Burroughs elaborated on the reasoning behind that good and timely advice. He wrote, in part, "When hysteria is deliberately and systematically cultivated and fomented by a governing party, it can be relied upon to get worse and worse, to spread and deepen. ... The remedy is simple—a calm, objective, common-sense approach. ... This planet could be a reasonably pleasant place to live if everybody could just mind his own business and let others do the same. ... Then along came Ronnie and Nancy, hand in hand, to tell us nobody has the right to mind his own business: 'Indifference is not an option. Only outspoken insistence that drug use will not be tolerated.' Everyone is obliged to become hysterical at the mere thought of drug use, just as office workers in Orwell's 1984 were obligated to scream curses, like Pavlov's frothing dogs, when the enemy leader appeared on screen. And they'd better scream loud and ugly. William von Raab, former head of U.S. Customs, went even further: 'This is war, and anyone who even suggests a tolerant attitude toward drug use should be considered a traitor.' ... It is disquieting to speculate what may lurk behind this colossal red herring of the War Against Drugs—a war neither likely to, nor designed to, succeed. ... According to a survey conducted recently by the *Washington Post* and ABC News, 62 percent of Americans would be willing to give up 'a few freedoms we have in this country' to significantly reduce illegal drug use; 55 percent said they favored mandatory drug tests for all Americans; 52 percent said they would agree to let police search homes of suspected drug dealers without a court order, even if houses 'of people like you were sometimes searched by mistake'; and fully 83 percent favored encouraging people to report drug users to police, 'even if it means telling police about a family member who uses drugs.' President Bush said in his television address not long ago: 'Our outrage against drugs unites us as a nation.' A nation of what? Snoops and informers?"

## Notches in their crosses

In March the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN)—founded by former Republican presidential hopeful Pat Robertson—plans to invade El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. Its mission: to sow salvation and then reap the souls. A CBN press release explains, "The spiritual harvest is expected to be more than 2 million souls in these three countries." Daniel Olson, CBN's "manager of international marketing and mission," told the *National Catholic Reporter's* Jim Castelli that Central American-based evangelicals "think this is the greatest thing that has ever happened to them. In terms of evangelical thrust, there has certainly never been anything like this in any of their countries." The war plan goes something like this: 40 units, each comprised of four missionaries, will tour the three countries showing *Jesus*, a film produced by the Campus Crusade for Christ. Concurrently, a pulpit army of Christian soldiers will blitz the nations with 10 million religious advertising tracts. This multimedia assault will be reinforced with public-service TV spots, three prime-time specials and coverage by Christian radio stations.

## Hold it

Last year Dan Quayle observed, "You have to watch every single word you utter. Every once in a while, you let a word or phrase out and you want to catch it and bring it back. You can't do that. It's gone, gone forever." Well not quite. The Democratic National Committee has commemorated Quayle's first year in office by publishing *Dan Quayle on the Record: The Waste of Losing a Mind*, a 10-page collection of the vice-presidential wisdom. Among Quayle's "most memorable insights and comments" is this choice remark made following the swearing-in ceremony on Inauguration Day: "They asked me to go out in front of the Reagans. I'm not used to going in front of President Reagan, so we went out behind the Bushes."



By David Moberg

CHICAGO

IT'S A SIMPLE STORY, A POLICE STORY," EXPLAINED Studs Terkel, contemporary chronicler nonpareil. "A mugging and robbing, then a maiming." Terkel was furiously describing the current crisis at WFMT-FM, home to his interviews and eclectic presentations for the past 28 years.

Considered by many to be the best fine arts programming station in the country and a source for 100 stations nationwide, WFMT's distinctive style persevered against a tide of radio mediocrity, thanks in part to the fierce loyalty of its small band of listeners. Now, however, those listeners fear the station's character is being threatened by its owner—ironically the not-for-profit Chicago Educational Television Association (CETA).

Although this particular police story is filled with local anachronisms, similar muggings have, in recent years, distressed listeners in Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York, among other cities. Investors and escalating bids for the limited number of radio frequencies create strong pressures to boost station revenues and to maximize profits. No longer buffered by the Reaganized Federal Communications Commission (FCC), these market trends threaten broadcasting diversity and minority programming tastes. And when that threat hangs over a station like WFMT—more of a friend to the Chicago Symphony and the Art Institute than to commercial business—it raises hackles high.

Founded as a commercial station in 1951 by Bernard and Rita Jacobs, WFMT not only featured classical music, but folk music, debate, cultural commentary, Terkel's forums, and a laid-back, educated tone exemplified by its refusal to air pre-recorded ads. Instead of running jingles, announcers read and helped write ad copy, pleasing not only listeners, but loyal advertisers as well.

**A not-so-final sale:** In 1969, a terminally ill Jacobs sold the station to the Chicago Tribune Company. A citizens group requested that the FCC reverse the sale on the grounds that the *Tribune*—which then owned two daily papers, an AM radio station, a television station and several suburban newspapers—held a media monopoly. At the same time, the *Tribune's* New York TV station was under attack before the FCC by black community critics for inadequate minority coverage. Faced with this, The *Tribune* decided to save itself trouble and legal fees and avoid financial disclosures to the FCC by dropping its

## Chicago's fine arts station fights corporate erosion



WFMT commentator Studs Terkel.

plans to continue operating the station.

Under FCC rules, which at that time prohibited quick turnover trafficking of broadcasting frequencies, the *Tribune* couldn't sell. So it transferred WFMT—along with the less than \$1 million it owed Jacobs' estate—to CETA, which then operated WTTW-TV, the city's major public television station. The transfer agreement stipulated that CETA could not sell WFMT for 10 years and should maintain the station's character and programming content.

WFMT, whose own board acted as a buffer between the station and CETA, paid off the debt to Jacobs, financed an expensive new studio out of its revenues, and continued to pour more than \$3 million in profits from the station and its program guide into CETA over the next 14 years. The WFMT and WTTW program guides grew into a fat city magazine called *Chicago*—quite profitable until it slipped financially in 1984 and lost money the following year. Taking advantage of *Chicago's* financial troubles and a dissatisfied minority within the WFMT/*Chicago* ranks, CETA managers eliminated the WFMT board, displaced the long-time station manager with an appliance executive and sold the magazine to Adams Communications Corporation, its current owner, for \$17 million.

The loss of the magazine left the station with too much overhead to run its operations—which included so much live broadcasting that the station could have claimed to employ the largest number of union musicians in Chicago—and from 1985 on, WFMT lost money. The new management was unstable and ineffective, and the staff de-

moralized by CETA's direct intervention. At the same time, another classical music station, WNIB-FM, boosted its power signal and became a stronger competitor, offering a low-budget program of "accessible" recordings that appealed to those seeking background music.

**Too proud to beg:** With an income of about \$5 million and a deficit of more than \$400,000, CETA last year insisted that WFMT conduct a fund-raising appeal. Although the station has long held annual marathon fundraisers for the Chicago Symphony and the Lyric Opera, the staff resented having to air its own "begathon," insisting it was unnecessary since the interest on the endowment from the sale of *Chicago* magazine would have more than covered the deficit.

Last fall WFMT lost some big advertisers for commercial and regulatory reasons unre-

## BROADCAST NEWS

lated to its programming and, according to one rating service, dropped sharply below WNIB in popularity. Another service, however, showed it with a 50 percent advantage over WNIB among the 3 percent of listeners who tune in to classical music. That news precipitated the "maiming" lamented by Terkel: seven full-time staff members, including the station's best ad salesman and top program people, were fired, and, shortly afterwards WFMT began accepting pre-recorded ads.

Friends of WFMT, a group comprised heavily of prominent arts figures and intellectuals like Garry Wills tried to get the original transfer agreement between the Tribune Company and CETA recognized as a public trust. But the courts ruled that only the state attorney general could request such an action. The state attorney general, however, has been reluctant to cross the powerful board of CETA, which, although it includes culturally prominent individuals, is dominated by local big business executives. The citizens group is appealing the decision and also has petitioned the FCC to condition the license to accept the public trust.

But Andrew Schwartzman, director of the Washington-based Media Access Project, warns that former President Ronald Reagan's FCC has no interest in "anything but the most theoretical, technical qualifications of some-

body to own a broadcasting property, and anything that relates to how they operate their franchise is beyond [the FCC's] scope." Despite the specific details of the WFMT case, Schwartzman said, "It's symbolic and an extreme example of the impact of deregulation and the FCC's disdain for undertaking any kind of regulatory role. In that regard, it's representative of a national trend."

**Pop wavelengths:** WFMT listeners fear another trend. Investors are willing to pay big bucks for a frequency—possibly up to \$30 million for WFMT. But to justify such investments, buyers quickly shift to the most popular formats.

Some are saying that Chicago's WTTW-TV, which claims to be the most-watched public TV station in the country, could deliver WFMT from the clutches of such investors. But WFMT staff and supporters think WTTW—which has been aggressive in pursuing corporate sponsors, but unambitious when it comes to producing new programs of its own—simply wants the radio station to make lots of money or be sold, leaving WTTW with another fat endowment. Enforcing the public trust, argues their attorney Leon Despres, could discourage such a sale.

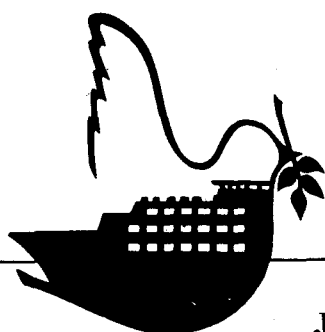
WFMT general manager Alfred Antlitz insists that a sale is "not on the agenda here," but that the station needs to cut its costs and "tighten up on programming" by providing more music and less talk. "We don't know what the economic impact [of the new ad policy] will be," continues Antlitz, who insists that the ultimate goal is to preserve the station's character. "If our goal is simply to make money, we'd go one way," he said. "But the goal has got to be to preserve the essence of what this station is."

**Shelter from the storm:** On March 1 the staff of WFMT will vote on whether or not to form a union, although WFMT Employees has informally represented some of the 40-plus staff in discussions with management and the board for two years. The proposed union, which could be independent or could affiliate with AFTRA (a radio and TV professionals' union), would address both job security and station policy concerns.

Chief announcer Mel Zellman, a union supporter, worries that the new ad policy and further changes at the station undermine what *Chicago Reader* media critic Michael Miner called the station's "urbanity." "A bit of civility has been eroded," wrote Zellman recently. "The real danger is that this encroachment makes it easier to erode further what people who work here and people who listen both treasure. The tension is [over] how much character can we retain and how much must we change to meet demands of the market." If WTTW really believed in the station, it would invest at least some of the endowment interest to sustain WFMT while it gradually implemented changes, says Zellman.

Upon being blacklisted from broadcasting in the early '50s for his leftist politics, Terkel was attracted to WFMT after hearing the station play a Woody Guthrie song. He argues that WFMT—founded on "the crazy idea that this would be a station that respects the intelligence of the listener"—has been "the center of the city's cultural life." Terkel says he feels like a character in a Dickens novel in which a guardian steals an orphan's money, then forces him out into the street to beg.

"But they stole our money," says Terkel. "I'm reporting a robbery, and no one is listening. I dialed 911, but the cops aren't coming."



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By James North

**F**ATIMA MEER, THE INDIAN SOUTH AFRICAN sociologist and activist who has known Nelson Mandela since the '40s, got a chance to visit him before his release. "One of his major concerns," she told an American TV audience, "was that his public image was getting too inflated. He was concerned to scale it down."

Mandela's modesty is not just another of the remarkable characteristics of a man who has emerged from 27 years in prison with a serenity and wisdom that few can ever hope to achieve. It is a convincing sign that the political insight and sophistication that won him a national leadership role before he ever started what he has called "those long, lonely, wasted years" in prison is still a prominent part of his make-up.

His adversaries—they are not all white, and they are by no means limited to what the mainstream press insists on erroneously calling "the Afrikaner government"—should have already learned that they are not dealing with a tired old man who will happily settle into the benign role of figurehead and elder statesman. But neither are they going to be negotiating with a messiah who wants to—or even can—issue top-down orders to a vast anti-apartheid movement both inside and outside the country that has organized hundreds of trade unions and community organizations, which are run, in spite of the police state restrictions, in a strikingly democratic way.

**Standing tall:** One after another, Mandela made the main points on February 11 from the steps of the City Hall in Cape Town:

- apartheid is not about to crumble;
- he is a "loyal and disciplined member" of the African National Congress (ANC), and he has not and will not negotiate without consulting his organization;
- the ANC's armed struggle, a low-level guerrilla war that has been slowly but steadily increasing over the past decade, should continue;
- the international community should maintain sanctions and other "efforts to isolate the apartheid regime"; and
- he will not repudiate the South African Communist Party, which has a long-standing close alliance with the ANC.

One of Mandela's main tasks in the months to come will be to dispel the myth that he stands for something called "black rule." Local whites may be excused for their ignorance by the tight censorship that prevented them from reading his words, hearing his voice or even seeing his photograph. But international commentators should know better. The ANC has waged a long campaign against black leaders who wanted to "go it alone," fighting for a South Africa that "belongs" to "Africans."

The ANC's position, embodied in the very first line of the 1955 Freedom Charter, is "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white." The organization's principled adherence to this view has meant it suffered a major split in the late '50s and risked losing support at times since then. It was only in the early to mid-'80s that the ANC's "non-racial" stand got a firm upper hand over the quite understandable tendency in the black community toward exclusivity. Having more or less won this battle, the ANC is not about to readily settle for a new political arrangement that would

## Intact apartheid awaits a not-so-tired Mandela



Nelson Mandela before serving 27 "long, lonely, wasted years" in prison.

give whites special group rights or disproportionate representation.

Mandela's release marks the beginning of some feverish maneuverings. The internal resistance and the international pressure have forced some substantial concessions,

but apartheid, especially as a system of economic domination, remains intact. *Up-rooting Poverty*, a recent decade-long study sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation showed that South Africa has the most unequal distribution of income of any country

in the world and that two-thirds of black Africans earn less than they need for subsistence.

**The real threat:** The big business community in South Africa, which has made fortunes over the past century in mining, manufacturing and agriculture by exploiting cheap black labor, does not mind desegregating beaches and restaurants. But when Mandela and the ANC continue their call to redress the terrible economic imbalance by nationalizing the mines and heavy industry and by carrying through a sweeping land reform, the business leaders will be less happy.

Business has long looked for succor to Chief Gatsha Buthelezi of the Natal region, who should soon be the beneficiary of a generous, positive international propaganda campaign. His stand against economic sanctions will receive increased attention.

**One of Mandela's main tasks will be to dispel the myth that he stands for something called "black rule."**

Buthelezi, an ANC member long ago, rose through the regime's tribally-based puppet structure while Mandela and the other leaders were silenced in prison. During the '80s, his support in the Zulu-speaking regions (it is non-existent anywhere else) declined partly because his followers bore a good part of the blame for vicious fighting with ANC supporters in which hundreds have died. But the ANC does recognize that some of Buthelezi's support is still genuine, and it will not exclude him from negotiations.

This big-business effort to tame the anti-apartheid movement, probably in some kind of loose alliance with Buthelezi, is a greater threat to genuine liberation than the far-right white histrionics that the visiting interna-

*Continued on page 22*

### In memory of the thousands of voices silenced by South Africa's racist regime

For those of us with some first-hand experience in southern Africa, the release of Nelson Mandela provoked extraordinary and at times conflicting emotions. There was, of course, elation as he walked down that Cape road, but it was combined with shock at how much he had aged since the last photographs in the middle '60s. There was also rage at the thought of how much better off his nation, his continent and his world would have been by having him and his counsel a part of it during the last three decades.

That sense of waste prompts more personal memories of a few of the thousands of victims who have been killed for their fight against apartheid. Although the regime claims it is doing away with the system, it will have to reckon with the memory of these victims and bring their killers to justice.

**Anton Lubowski**, murdered in 1989. Anton, the first white man to join SWAPO, the Namibian liberation organization, was a dapper, fun-loving human rights lawyer whose cheerful smile and carefree lifestyle could at first obscure his thoughtfulness

and courage. He was shot down in the streets of Windhoek by an assassin last September, just months before his movement won the territory's first free elections. He was only 37, and he had been mentioned, fittingly, as SWAPO's choice for the new nation's first minister of justice.

**David Webster**, murdered in 1989. A death squad killed David, a gentle white anthropologist who was active in the Detainees Parents Support Committee on behalf of the 25,000-30,000 people who were locked up without trial during the unrest of the middle '80s. No one has been arrested for killing him.

**Eric Mntonga**, murdered in 1986. Eric was an extremely polite, articulate official in the South African Allied Workers Union, one of the dozens of new labor organizations that sprang up in the '80s. Assassins stabbed him apparently as a reprisal for joining a delegation of both white and black people who left the country openly to meet with the African National Congress in exile.

**Petrus (Nzima) Nyawose**, murdered in 1982. Petrus was also a trade unionist,

a garment worker, who had been forced to flee into neighboring Swaziland. A car bomb killed him along with his wife, Jabu. His nickname, Nzima, the Zulu word for "large," was an affectionate reference to his tubby figure.

**Griffiths Mxenge**, murdered in 1981. He was a distinguished Durban human rights lawyer. Recent testimony indicates that a death squad run by the South African police killed him. Griffiths was convivial, with an animated, rubbery grin, and he used to enjoy meeting white visitors in the back of a Chinese restaurant in the city of Durban; the garish establishment was one of the few places back then that served all races. His killers apparently feigned car trouble. When he, completely in character, stopped to help, they stabbed him dozens of times in an effort to make him look like the victim of an ordinary street crime. Four years later his widow, **Victoria Mxenge**, who was also a lawyer and who had taken over his practice, was also murdered. The killers trapped her on a darkened street, shot her and then buried an axe in her skull. —J.N.



## In the midst of bleakness, a sparkle of liberation

By Salim Muwakkil

**T**HE ENORMOUS CROWDS OF BLACK SOUTH Africans celebrating Nelson Mandela's release from prison with exuberant dancing have added some color and rhythm to the remarkable freedom party that began in Eastern Europe.

Mandela's dignified presence materialized on the world stage as if summoned by the collective psyches of the African diaspora. If ever there were a time for a race savior it is now. Most African countries face daunting futures (see *In These Times*, Jan. 7), and black citizens of other lands are confronting increased racism. In the midst of this manifest bleakness, Mandela's liberation sparkles like a gold tooth. The 71-year-old freedom fighter's gracious manner and sober intelligence belies the fierce dedication that sustained him during 27 years of imprisonment and offers a soothing tonic for a continent in crisis.

Even Jesse Jackson, the putative president of black America, strains to touch Mandela's garment. Media pundits are rushing to criticize Jackson's "rank opportunism" for jetting to Cape Town to share the spotlight with Mandela upon his February 12 release, but they haven't bothered to offer an alternative. Who better than Jackson to serve as the Afri-

can-American ambassador? As a once and future activist, who other than the two-time presidential candidate could best represent the fruit of successful protest?

Also, Mandela's historic aura infuses Jackson with the kind of credibility he needs back home. The joy expressed by Mandela's release echoes deeply in the hearts of African-Americans, partly because his struggle reminds us of those days when our enemies were more concrete. Apartheid is Nazism's closest relative, and Mandela's cause is manifestly just.

Many African-Americans long for such clarity. The black movement here has stalled primarily because the enemy is more abstract. The problems besetting citizens of African descent are less obvious than codified racism and murderous storm troopers.

However, they are problems South Africa's blacks will face as well as they gain increasing access into a more inclusive—though largely white-oriented—society. The problems are all the progeny of self-hatred. After centuries of socialization as inferiors, blacks have remained harnessed and haunted by ghosts of their past.

Jackson, like Africa's children worldwide, is hoping that Mandela may be a true ghost-buster. □



Nelson Mandela's release: a soothing tonic for a continent in crisis.

By Steve Askin  
and Jose Manuel das Fontes

HARARE, ZIMBABWE

**W**HILE SOUTH AFRICANS CELEBRATED the release of their imprisoned leader in Cape Town last week, people in another southern African community mourned 17 victims of apartheid-linked violence.

The day African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela was freed after 27 years in prison, a machete-wielding band of Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) fighters kidnapped 20 Mozambican villagers at dawn and hacked 17 to death, leaving the bodies on a road near Xai Xai, the capital of Mozambique's Gaza province. The previous week, another RENAMO gang marched across the border into neighboring Zimbabwe and massacred four children and three adults in the isolated Mount Darwin area. Such killings are part of a "systematic and brutal war of terror"—as even the U.S. State Department has acknowledged—by a contra-style group that has relied on South African arms and advisers for the past decade while slaughtering hundreds of thousands of unarmed civilians.

On the other side of the southern African subcontinent in the Angolan capital of Luanda, Mandela's first week of freedom was a time of potentially disastrous water shortages, after the forces of South Africa's long-time ally, Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, reportedly knocked out part of Luanda's water supply system.

There is no evidence that Pretoria directly instigated the latest anti-civilian terror. On the contrary, strong signs suggest that South

## Pretoria's destabilization wars leave deadly legacy of disruption

African President F.W. de Klerk may have the political will that his predecessor lacked to meet international treaty obligations and wind down violence against black-led neighbors.

What the continuing carnage illustrates instead is that stopping South Africa's wars against the so-called frontline states will be a slow and painful process—in some ways even more tortuous than the gradual slouch toward apartheid's abolition. South African instigated violence has killed 1.5 million people in five southern African nations since 1980, according to recent United Nations studies. It cost the six frontline states—Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe—\$10 billion a year in economic losses.

De Klerk's predecessor, P.W. Botha, signed a peace pact with Mozambique in 1984, but observers across the political spectrum—including the U.S. ambassador in Maputo, other West and East-bloc diplomats and non-partisan aid agencies—repeatedly reported that South Africa continued to arm RENAMO and support it logistically through last year.

Conditions are very different but not less grim on the other side of the continent where Pretoria signed a peace pact with Angola and Cuba in December 1988, ending 14 years of South African intervention. For the most part, South Africa has avoided further violence against Angola—a nation that will be further insulated from direct South African aggression

after Namibia becomes independent on March 21. Pretoria's might, however, still shores up Savimbi, who has said the South Africans left him several year's worth of fuel, ammunition and other supplies when they withdrew. And the CIA has stepped up its aid to fill any remaining gap, because U.S. President George Bush ranks Savimbi's UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) alongside the Nicaraguan contras on his list of most favored right-wing "freedom fighters."

Destabilization of the frontline states had at least three objectives. First, it aimed to drive ANC guerrillas back from neighboring states before they ever reached South Africa.

Second, it aimed to destroy neighboring economies and make them "hostages to head off international sanctions," as well as a captive substitute for lost overseas markets, as Joseph Hanlon wrote in a 1986 study.

Third, suffering in black-led states helped fulfill white fantasies that majority rule equals chaos. Chaos had to be fomented by

**Stopping South Africa's wars against the so-called frontline states will be a slow and painful process.**

South Africa because the frontline states all enjoy internal racial peace. Racial harmony next door has always been an embarrassment to Pretoria, as Botswana's usually tongue-tied President Quett Masire noted with eloquent emotion after South African Defense Force raiders killed a dozen sleeping civilians in 1985. "We have, in spite of South Africa, developed a system of good government based on the consent of the people," he said. "We pray that someday South Africa will copy our way and practice it."

Destabilization's greatest "successes" were military, forcing all of South Africa's neighbors to bar anti-apartheid guerrillas from their territory. It also scored victories on the economic front as South Africa's use of surrogates to blow up bridges, rail lines, factories and oil pipelines increased neighbors' dependency and forced them to remain South Africa's unwilling trading partners.

Still, destabilization failed politically and morally. None of the frontline states was bullied into opposing sanctions or turning against the African National Congress and other anti-apartheid groups. Mandela hailed their costly courage in his first post-prison speech, pledging that "the sacrifices of the frontline states will be remembered by South Africans forever."

De Klerk's prison meetings with Mandela had parallels in his earlier trips to neighboring Mozambique and Zambia. Yet, just as freeing and talking to Mandela does not end apartheid, friendly exchanges with foreign leaders won't automatically translate into international peace.

Past experience may even encourage continued low-intensity regional war by the South African security establishment, as



such a strategy partly "worked" for whites during the talks that turned Rhodesia into Zimbabwe. The worst Rhodesian incursions against neighbors came after the first talks between former Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith and his black adversaries. The violence forced Presidents Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and the late Samora Machel of

Mozambique to press now-President Robert Mugabe and other Zimbabwe independence leaders to accept the compromise that gave whites 10 years of special political and economic privileges. Zimbabwe's white elite successfully used those 10 years—which finally expire this April—to entrench their economic power even under a predominant-

ly black government.

Even if Pretoria pulls back from destabilization, it will leave a deadly legacy of region-wide disruption. Neither aid nor indigenous resources nor foreign investment will suffice to rebuild the farms and factories and transport lines ruined in the past decade of destabilization. And no amount of money could

undo the human damage wrought in a country like Mozambique, where South Africa's deadly legacy includes RENAMO's 15,000 to 20,000 armed men and boys, a violent and disorderly force trained only to loot and kill. □

**Steve Askin and Jose Manuel das Fontes** are Zimbabwe-based journalists.

*Following are excerpts taken from an interview conducted by Jacqueline Howard-Matthews with Patrick Lekota, publicity secretary of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and member of the African National Congress (ANC), four days before the release of Nelson Mandela. Lekota was imprisoned with Mandela from 1976 until 1989 and was a defendant in the Delmas treason trial, which lasted from 1985 to 1988. He was released after the South African Supreme Court overturned his conviction last year.*

#### **What is your analysis of the reforms announced last week by South African President F.W. de Klerk?**

The actions of the state in the '80s did not have a long-lasting impact on our political activities. And so, in 1990 the government had very little choice. It had to take another route, and that route is expressed in the recent pronouncements of de Klerk. Inside the country, and I am sure abroad as well, we are proud to have regained our right to public political protest and other forms of political expression. We think that it is an important stepping stone. However, we must press forward for real democratization in the country. Of course, a lot of debates will take place at home; we must and will analyze de Klerk's speech. Our debates will determine what is to be done and at what point.

#### **What has changed in South Africa since the recent announcement of reforms?**

Very little has changed, except that we can officially set up ANC chapters inside the country. Let's look at the situation before the unbanning of the UDF. That organization had literally unbanned itself; it was publicly organizing the people and the people were clearly supportive of its calls for action. So, in actuality, even as de Klerk was preparing to announce his so-called reforms, the UDF was already overground and on the move. De Klerk did nothing that was particularly new. In addition, the majority of repressive laws remain on the books. The bantustan land system is unchanged. The declaration of a state of emergency is a weapon that can still be used against us. Indefinite detainment and imprisonment continue to be legal under section 28 of the Internal Security Act. De Klerk didn't say that he would get rid of it. Lifetime imprisonment for political activities is certainly guaranteed under section 29.

#### **If the reforms announced by de Klerk have not significantly influenced the lives of African people, have they [reforms] affected the white community?**

Within the pockets of Afrikaner political opinion—the National Party, the Conservative Party, the AWB [Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging or Afrikaner Resistance Movement], and some of these other groups—tensions have risen. The current leadership of the National Party is a generation of men who really grew up after 1948. When P.W. Botha left parliament last year, effectively the old generation of Afrikaners that came to power with the National

## **Pace of political change must be levied from below**

Party in 1948 disappeared from the scene. The younger ones are very sensitive to the international community, and they have been educated in different conditions. They will be responsive, of course, provided we maintain pressure on them.

On the other hand, Dr. [Andries] Treurnicht, the leader of the Conservative Party, has been urging the conservatives to take determined action against the reforms introduced by de Klerk. Because of the tensions that I have just described, it would appear that the most important change that is attributable to the actions of de Klerk resides within the white political community.

#### **What is the likely response of the whites organized in political groups to the right of the National Party, including the Conservative Party led by Treurnicht and the AWB, which espouses the formation of an Afrikaner nation state in the Orange Free State, Transvaal and parts of northern Natal?**

Based on their mood at present, I would anticipate that the right-wingers would attempt to take the lives of some of the National Party members. I can't foresee, however, as some people have suggested, that the Conservative Party would initiate a coup against de Klerk. I just don't expect such a thing. The pattern has been so far that David Malan, the head of the South African Army, seems to be aware that he has no political future unless he cooperates with de Klerk. Malan's actions in the last couple of weeks show that he has been cooperating with the state president. He has reduced, for instance, the period of military service, and he even reduced the sentences of those of our comrades who were conscientious objectors. These people refused to serve in the South African Defense Force; they chose not to defend apartheid and Malan shortened their punishment. These kinds of actions clearly suggest that the head of the army supports the initiatives of the state president.

#### **Can you tell us about the meeting of the National General Council in April 1990?**

That is a very important question because it speaks to the future, our efforts to decide collectively and broad-based analysis of de Klerk's reforms. The National General Council is the national conference of the UDF. In April of this year, representatives of more than 1,200 organizations affiliated with the UDF around the country will meet as the National General Council, and they will decide the new name of the UDF. In addition, the Council will address a number of questions. Now that the ANC has been unbanned, will the UDF continue to exist or will it disappear into history? Will the official name of the organization become the ANC? I think that the consensus will

be that we must get rid of all these organizations used as a cover for the ANC. Now that we can operate in the open, these alternative names are not necessary. The ANC can move from the underground, and we can move on to more pressing parts of the political agenda.

We need to address organizational structure. How are we going to make it operate? I am satisfied that the rank-and-file members of the movement are ready to restore the ANC to public leadership in the movement.

#### **Will the ANC seek to create a relationship with some of the more moderate forces within the white society?**

Well, the position of the movement is that it is going to pressure for advance toward negotiations and it will pressure the government to release, for instance, those political prisoners who remain behind bars. We will continue to follow the principles of the Harare Declaration announced in 1989. [The Harare Declaration outlined the ANC's requirements for negotiations with the South African government, among them a demand that the government release all political prisoners.] It is for sure—and I must emphasize this point—we cannot allow de Klerk to dictate the pace of future political change. We will intensify our activities around political education, and we will tighten our organizational structures.

#### **What is the role of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC? Is its role today the same one that it had last month or last year?**

It remains the same. The movement has made plain the position that it will not renounce violence until it is absolutely satisfied that the government is genuine about negotiations and that it is moving along those lines. The government has not fulfilled the Harare Declaration, and it would be foolish to get rid of the army before we are satisfied that negotiations are underway. The army remains; however, I think that in the course of the coming months and the year, there will be more emphasis on the non-violent side of things.

#### **Is socialist development an integral part of the ANC's vision of the new and future South African political economy? Or will tenets of capitalist development guide transformation? Will the ANC nationalize the centers of production?**

Well, the position of the movement—and it has not changed since 1955 when the Freedom Charter was drafted—is that there is going to be a nationalization of the monopoly sector of the economy. Other sectors of the economy will remain absolutely under free enterprise. It is in that sense that we talk about a mixed economy when we are sent to power. The fact of the matter is that unless

the government nationalizes the monopoly sectors there will be no capital available to be diverted toward black communities so that they could be uplifted.

There are many people in these communities that have made a lot of contributions to the economic development of South Africa but who over the years have not had any benefits directed toward them. It is the supreme task of the movement, if freedom is to mean anything to the rank-and-file members who have been supporting it, to take steps that will produce practical changes in the lives of ordinary men and women. For instance, by way of supply of houses and by way of supply of schools, as well as other ways, our people will find their new freedom meaningful. If the government is to undertake a large-scale agenda in which it corrects the disparities caused by apartheid in the black communities, it must have capital.

#### **Will socialist development play a role in the economic program that you have just described?**

There is an interesting point that one has to make in this regard. There tends to be an understanding by observers of our struggle that nationalization equals socialism. Our view is that socialism entails more than just nationalization. Nationalization of sectors of the economy does not necessarily mean socialism. In any event, the ANC is a national liberation organization; it is not a class organization. Many classes and organizations constitute the ANC—intellectuals, workers, peasants, middle-class businessmen and others.

The agenda of the ANC is a Freedom Charter, and we consider that the Freedom Charter will introduce a phase in the economy of the country that is perhaps transitory in nature; it will mature in time. ... Whether our society will advance in the direction of full socialism or whether it will take a capitalist path of development is a matter which will be determined by the majority when it votes. But, for the moment, it is not the objective of the ANC and it has never been the objective of the ANC.

#### **And last, at this moment in history, what does the ANC request of the international community?**

The immediate and most important thing is that the community must keep pressure on the South African government to move toward negotiation, and that means that sanctions must stay in place, perhaps even be intensified. The reason is that if there is a relaxation of the pressure on the government, it will drag its feet toward the conference table. Even if the government went to the conference table, it will always retreat. The only way that a disaster can be averted is that the international community forces the government to go to the conference table and to stay there until a democratic constitution is produced. □

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IN THESE TIMES FEB. 21-27, 1990 9



By David R. Dye  
and William Gasperini

MANAGUA

**L**OOK AROUND NICARAGUA THESE DAYS AND the image of Daniel Ortega peers out from nearly everywhere. His face adorns T-shirts, posters, billboards and even crude paintings on building walls.

Like his image, the 44-year-old Sandinista presidential candidate also seems to be everywhere, plodding along the frenetic campaign trail each morning, afternoon and night. He clop-clops on horseback into this village or that town, waves from atop a pickup truck surrounded by crowds in Managua's neighborhoods and speaks to the TV cameras after meeting with church leaders, foreign election observers and Sandinista candidates for municipal offices.

In contrast, his principal opponent, Violeta Chamorro, seems to be nowhere. Her portrait is rarely seen, although white flags or banners with the blue letters UNO (National Opposition Union), for the 11-party coalition she heads, are visible. For two weeks in January the 60-year-old candidate was absent entirely, recuperating from a fractured knee in a Houston hospital.

Her campaign appearances have drawn crowds ranging from small groups to an enthusiastic 10,000 supporters in the conservative city of Granada. UNO supporters cheer wildly as the ghostly-white lady flashes a smile and a "V for victory" from her wheelchair.

## The making of a president: Nicaragua's 1990 election

The contrast between the two principals in Nicaragua's election campaign is readily apparent. But given the context of the campaign—particularly the U.S. role—the contrast extends far beyond Ortega and Chamorro. The story of the 1990 electoral process has become a contest between markedly different degrees of organizational strength, political sophistication and ability to gauge the public mood.

Among a plethora of recent opinion polls in Nicaragua, the most reliable and independent surveys show Ortega leading Chamorro by as much as a 2-to-1 margin (see accompanying story), with the proportion of undecided voters falling dramatically.

To the outside observer this might seem extraordinary, given the grave economic problems facing the country. Hyperinflation, declining living standards and general economic malaise led many opposition leaders to assert they could put up almost anyone and an exhausted public would vote for the candidate simply to be rid of the Sandinistas.

Evidently, U.S. President George Bush thought so too, earmarking \$9 million for the UNO campaign although most of it is offi-

cially restricted to just promoting the democratic process. This came after 10 years of attempts at "making the economy scream" through economic embargo, diplomatic isolation and contra war.

Overcoming the Sandinistas, however, is turning out to be more difficult than simply offering a chance for change.

**Ortega's personal appeal:** Far more than in the 1984 election campaign, the current electoral process has increasingly focused on Ortega as a person, highlighting his role as a "president of peace." Given recent changes such as events in Eastern Europe and declining support for the contras, the Sandinistas say, Ortega is the only person who can bring peace and reconciliation to the war-torn country.

His campaign features numerous traditional elements—inaugurating public works projects, giving away items such as baseball bats and gloves for community use, hugging children for Polaroid snapshots and giving the pictures to proud parents. The strategy is well-calculated, with Ortega or Vice President Sergio Ramirez often returning to the same place for a separate appearance.

At every campaign stop, the leaders point to some of the revolution's achievements, including building new schools and health centers and giving poor *campesinos* title to their land. The candidates also remind voters that the contras have tried to sabotage these reform efforts and that UNO wants to return land to rich landowners.

The overriding Sandinista theme, however, is that peace is now within reach, and that when the war ends "todo sera mejor"—the Sandinistas' major campaign slogan, meaning "everything will be better."

Ortega also leaves no doubt about who else must be involved in the peace process. "The U.S. now has no choice but to seek an understanding with Nicaragua," Ortega said in a recent appearance, "because they know just as they lost the revolution against Somoza, the contra war and the 1984 [Nicaraguan] elections, they've also lost the elections of February 1990."

According to a recent poll by the Washington, D.C.-based Greenberg-Lake firm, the strategy of focusing on Ortega's ability to bring peace "with national dignity" appears to be working. The Sandinista leader's personal standing among voters rose 10 percentage points from December to January, with 66 percent now holding a favorable opinion of him.

The polling firm credits the increased standing to his handling of the U.S. invasion of Panama, particularly after U.S. troops illegally searched the residence of the Nicaraguan ambassador to Panama.

That incident, and Nicaragua's subsequent expulsion of 20 U.S. diplomats, provided a handy nationalistic cause around which the population could rally. The poll results also show that 64 percent of the population opposed the U.S. invasion. By affronting Nicaragua's sovereignty and honor, the Bush administration unwittingly afforded the Sandinistas a substantial boost.

**On the other side:** In contrast, Chamorro's

campaign has been plagued by strong internal tensions that have long characterized Nicaragua's political opposition. These tensions are especially acute between Chamorro's campaign manager Antonio Lacayo and the opposition party leaders within the UNO coalition. As Chamorro's son-in-law, Lacayo feels that his mother-in-law's interests are paramount. At the same time, the 10 other opposition leaders—ranging from conservatives to communists—are often caught between their own party interests and the need to promote unity in the coalition.

After a public altercation with opposition vice-presidential candidate Virgilio Godoy, Lacayo was relegated to managing only Chamorro's program. The individual party leaders are now focusing more attention on legislative and municipal races where they have more at stake as separate parties.

The UNO campaign also lacks political imagination and is increasingly bitter in tone. This is especially visible in Godoy, who served as minister of labor before breaking with the Sandinistas to run for president in 1984 with his liberal Independent Party. In that election Godoy called for an 11th-hour boycott of the balloting and effectively split the party. Although Godoy, like Chamorro, is a compromise candidate in the name of unity, he also stands accused of misappropriating party funds and casts a moody image over the campaign effort with a perpetual scowl.

A public perception that an UNO victory would mean a return to the past has also marred the opposition efforts. The Sandinistas have helped cultivate this image by exposing the links of numerous UNO candidates to the system of deposed dictator Anastasio Somoza. Pro-government newspapers have frequently reported that certain UNO candidates once belonged to Somoza's hated National Guard (GN).

Perhaps most importantly, the strong U.S. support for UNO and the coalition's ties with the contras are like an albatross around the opposition's neck. While UNO leaders officially deny regular reports that the contras are proselytizing for UNO in the countryside—even killing Sandinista supporters in many cases—the coalition tacitly accepts the contra support. This has rebounded in the government's favor, prompting the Sandinistas to dub the opposition the "GN-UNO." Although international observers have criticized the pro-government media's use of the "GN-UNO" tag, the label sticks.

In addition, Chamorro has also been unable to convince the electorate of her ability to govern, often seeming to rely on her assassinated husband's memory and "God" to lead the way. Pedro Joaquin Chamorro was Somoza's main opponent as editor of the opposition newspaper *La Prensa* until the National Guard killed him in 1978, providing the spark that led to the dictator's overthrow 18 months later.

Chamorro's campaign speeches are usually short and are mostly written by her closest advisers, including former contra director Alfredo Cesar. She often appears lost when speaking extemporaneously. The content of her message is simple: a vote for the Sandinistas is a vote for more economic hardship, war and misery. Carefully avoiding any mention of U.S. support for UNO, the implication is that an opposition victory would end U.S. hostility and then all would be "right" again.

### How they're doing: a peek at pre-election polls

Like the sharply-polarized political atmosphere in Nicaragua, the results of several recent opinion polls are as varied as the organizations or individuals who conduct them.

Most surveys show that the Sandinistas are likely to win the February 25 elections. At least two polls, however, show the National Opposition Union (UNO) coalition ahead, while others show voter preferences about even.

The latest poll was conducted by the Washington, D.C., firm Greenberg-Lake in collaboration with the Managua-based independent Itzani Research Institute. It shows President Daniel Ortega leading Violeta Chamorro 51 percent to 24 percent—a substantial increase since November. Pollsters interviewed close to 1,000 people, with a margin of error of 4 percent.

Firm President Stanley Greenberg says the results show a marked improvement in Ortega's standing as an individual candidate. The survey also shows the proportion of undecided voters dropping to just 15 percent, down from other polls taken in the past year and a half which had all shown the undecided bloc to be as high as 50 percent.

Several other polls taken by Nicaraguan firms have shown similar leads for Ortega. One of these, conducted last August by the opposition-controlled Moncloa Morales Foundation, found a Sandinista lead of 37 percent to 10 percent.

But at least two surveys show the UNO coalition in the lead. The opposition newspaper *La Prensa* published one of these last July to great fanfare. It showed both major candidates in a tie with about 13 percent each and a huge bloc of unde-

cided voters. Another poll conducted in October by the Costa Rica-based firm CID-Gallup showed Chamorro ahead 40 percent to 29 percent. Still another poll, commissioned recently by *La Prensa* from a U.S.-funded local organization called Via Civica, also came up with a huge opposition lead.

The problem with the results of all three is that organizations have declined to reveal their methodology, the nature of questions asked and even which regions of the country were included.

Other organizations, however, have described their methods in detail. Greenberg-Lake carefully trained Nicaraguan pollsters covering urban and rural regions as well as the isolated Atlantic coast. "Part of our budget was devoted to things like canoes," Greenberg says. "Working here was an experience, certainly quite different from the U.S."

Greenberg interviewers carried "secret ballot boxes" for those hesitant to declare their preferences openly. But the pollsters say only a few interviewees opted to use them. They also worked with local specialists on geography and sampling techniques. His firm conducted similar polls last year in El Salvador and Paraguay, and he says that in both cases the results became principal guides in reflecting citizen opinions.

The opposition has charged that the surveys showing an Ortega lead are biased, including Greenberg's. But in the absence of survey methodology from the other polls, it is hardly possible to place more weight on those conflicting results.

—D.R.D. & W.G.





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Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega campaigns at a rally in La Trinidad for this week's presidential contest.

The opposition conveniently turns the tables on responsibility for the war, saying that a "lack of democracy" provoked U.S. hostility against the Sandinistas. Opposition candidates incessantly denounce the military draft, accusing the government of "dragging our sons off to die in the mountains." Blaming the government for the country's many economic ills skirts any mention of economic embargo or basic needs for defense.

**Problem of image:** Aside from Chamorro's weak personal characteristics, few of the other top party leaders reflect an image of readiness to lead Nicaragua into a new future. Rather, they appear to be trying to take back something they have lost.

"The image project is one of classic right-wingers eager to roll back such things as agrarian reform, which people like," says a Managua-based diplomat.

Perhaps most telling is UNO's apparent underestimation of where the Nicaraguan people stand. Merely calling for a change might be appropriate for the Honduran electorate—more than 40 percent of which is illiterate. But Nicaraguans clearly want something more. After having lived through 12 years of insurrection and revolution, their level of awareness and political sophistication is very high. While UNO is doing well among the less literate sectors, research data indicate the intelligentsia is with the Sandinistas, as they project a vision for the future rather than retrogression.

One reason for the opposition's misreading of public sentiment is the disparate nature of the political groups represented in UNO. While the moderates want distance from the contras and shy away from a close proximity to the U.S., the far right is apparently not reconciled to the possibility of de-

### **Far more than in the 1984 election, the current campaign is increasingly focused on Ortega as a person.**

feat. They want the contras to remain as a "guarantee" to continue the fight after the voting.

**Minor parties with minor influence:** Apart from UNO and the Sandinistas, eight other minor parties are participating in the elections, from the Trotskyist Revolutionary Workers Party to various conservative splinter groups. The most important of these is the Social Christian Party (PSC), which has the support of former contra commander Eden Pastora.

Pastora returned in December but has had little impact on the political scene. All of the minor parties together have polled less than 10 percent in most opinion surveys. However, the PSC may do well on the Atlantic

coast now that Miskito Indian rebel leader Brooklyn Rivera has supported it in the race for National Assembly. Elections for regional councils are also taking place on the coast.

On top of the opposition coalition's other liabilities, the U.S. attempt to aid UNO financially has hampered the Chamorro effort. Although Congress approved the \$9 million aid package last October, the first check did not arrive until late December.

For their part the Sandinistas kept the funds bottled up in the bureaucracy, stuck in the cumbersome check-clearing procedures of the national banking system. This led Chamorro to charge that her group "had not even once cent" to spend on the campaign. And the paucity of campaign paraphernalia seems to confirm it.

But the responsibility also lies with the UNO directors. Possibly to avoid a law stipulating that half of foreign funds for particular parties must go to Nicaragua's Supreme Electoral Council (CSE) to finance overall campaign expenses, UNO set up the Institute for Electoral Training (IPCE) as a profit-making organization to receive some of the funds. This complicated matters further due to tax laws, and ultimately prompted the government to help the directors change IPCE's status to non-profit to facilitate delivery of the money. Opposition leaders now say more than \$2 million has arrived.

**Jimmy Carter on the scene:** The money was finally freed as part of an agreement

made with former U.S. President Jimmy Carter during his visit to Nicaragua in late January. Carter heads a delegation of election observers, and his third visit helped focus attention on opposition charges that conditions are still biased in the government's favor.

UNO has long maintained that the Sandinistas make free use of government vehicles, media time and resources. Opposition leaders also claim that state security agents intimidate opposition candidates. Pro-government media have often carried reports of UNO municipal candidates resigning from the campaign, purportedly under pressure from Sandinista activists.

After meeting with Ortega, Carter announced in late January that the Sandinista government had agreed to increase opposition access to television, end the alleged intimidation of opposition candidates and pay for use of all state resources.

The next day, Ortega met with Catholic bishops and announced another well-timed decision: pardons for more than 1,000 contras and 35 former National Guard members still in prison. These were relatively effortless moves clearly aimed to enhance Ortega's "president of peace" image. In the case of Carter, the Sandinistas appear to hope that boosting the former president's image as conciliator will only increase the value of his judgment on election day, particularly among the U.S. public.

*Continued on page 22*



By Alexander Cockburn  
and Richard McKerrow

## Bush's appetite whet for more fraud in Nicaragua

**A**S THE NICARAGUAN ELECTIONS TO BE HELD on February 25 draw near, what can Washington do to avert or discount disaster: the second election in Nicaragua's revolutionary history giving the Sandinistas a democratically obtained mandate?

The first such victory took place in 1984 when, in the opinion of international observers scrutinizing the contest, a freely run election gave the Sandinistas just under 70 percent of the popular vote. But the observer that mattered at this stage was the Reagan administration, and the U.S. press dutifully played its part by pretending that the election never took place, inventing in its stead, three days before the U.S. presidential election of Nov. 4, 1984, an entirely bogus "MiG scare." Amid trumpeting by the Reagan leadership that a "destabilizing" shipment of MiG-23s was nearing Nicaragua, the fact of the first freely conducted election in that nation's history was obliterated from North American consciousness—with the epitaph of Reagan's accusation that it was a fraud.

Though the Bush administration is trying to claim that its "pressure"—by which is meant the murderous sorties by the contras it finances—forced the Sandinistas to hold the elections upcoming on February 25, in fact the Nicaraguan government had always pledged to hold elections in 1990. Now the emphasis of the U.S. government is on damage control.

**Bush gloom and doom:** According to former CIA officer David MacMichael, who is covering the Nicaraguan elections for the U.S.-based Institute for Media Analysis, by late summer of last year the Bush administration had already concluded that the campaign of the National Opposition Union (UNO) presidential candidate, Violeta Chamorro, was doomed. "It appeared," MacMichael

wrote recently in *The Nation*, "that the Sandinistas might win after all, and with United Nations and Organization of American States observer teams in place it would be impossible for the U.S. credibly to charge fraud, as it had done in 1984. Since one of the Sandinistas' major claims was that they had restored peace, the administration decided to renew the contra military offensive to show that only an UNO victory would truly end the war."

Thus the killer detachments were launched southward from the contra base in Honduras, as their victims—among them 18 young reservists and two nuns—found to their cost. As the U.S. hoped, Ortega announced that he had no option but to end the cease-fire that only his government was observing. The U.S. press then played its part by raising a great clamor that Ortega "had shot himself in the foot" by demonstrating bad faith.

But to the intense disappointment of the Bush regime, Ortega and his government did not suspend the election and, indeed, the contra offensive sufficiently revolted enough UNO candidates for many of them to withdraw from the race. The next strategem was to claim that the Sandinistas were bullying their opponents.

In January U.S. State Department spokesperson Margaret Tutwiler duly leveled charges of "a striking pattern of Sandinista intimidation, harassment of the opposition and violence" raising "grave questions as to whether there can be truly free and fair elections in Nicaragua." But, thus far at least, the U.S. press is proving not quite as pliant as in 1984. On January 25 the *Washington Post*, under the headline "U.S. Accused of Over-

stating Managua Election Offenses," quoted a senior U.N. official to the effect that UNO was attempting "political manipulation." When pressed for detail by U.N. observers, UNO officials seemed "very reluctant to back up their charges with specifics."

**If at first you don't succeed...** A second strategem of the U.S. government was to attempt purchase of the election outright—continuing a habitual tactic. Aside from paying for the contras, the U.S. government has sent down to its clients within Nicaragua no less than \$26.2 million since 1984 (on the estimate of Hemisphere Initiatives). This sum is equivalent in per capita terms to a foreign country bombarding a U.S. election campaign with more than \$2 billion, four times the \$460 million spent on all U.S. congressional races in 1988. Part of this munificence was a \$9 million congressional aid package designated for the elections.

Under Nicaraguan law, half the money coming from abroad for contending parties must be awarded to the government electoral council. The U.S. press is now charging that while the Sandinistas are diligent in pocketing their share of the slush from *El Norte*, UNO's portion is beset with bureaucratic delay.

Though it would be surprising if this were so, UNO front groups have certainly received a substantial slice of the cash, since their officials have been rolling around in brand new jeeps and paying their poll watchers as much as \$20 or \$30 a day—a hefty wage by Third World standards. Indeed, the furious infighting among UNO factions is as much responsible for delay as anything the Nicaraguan government has engineered.

UNO campaign manager Antonio Lacayo

and his allies glare across the campaign coffers at the malodorous vice-presidential candidate for UNO, Virgilio Godoy. Lacayo has refused to make available the figures on foreign funds to members of UNO's political council and has prevented the treasurer from scrutinizing the books. For his part, Godoy refused to let Lacayo up on the platform when the latter, Chamorro's son-in-law, arrived late at a campaign meeting.

Despite a marginal stiffening in the backbone of the U.S. press, it is not difficult to imagine a network TV news report from Nicaragua the night of February 25 beginning with the words: "Charges of harassment and ballot fraud marred what Sandinista leaders hail as a convincing victory. Tonight the U.S. Embassy here denounced what they called 'outrageous breaches of electoral law.'" It would take only a couple of stories like this—from a network reporter from ABC, NBC or CBS or from a reporter with a major newspaper or wire service—for the Bush administration to discount the election once more as a fraud and call for more money for the contras and for a deepening of the embargo.

**All the fraud that's fit to print:** How likely is this scenario? Back on Dec. 12, 1989, the *New York Times* reported pre-electoral violence in Masatepe as the work of "Sandinista mobs" who set out to "intimidate and harass its opponents" and killed an "opposition supporter." In fact, the lad was a Sandinista supporter, Manuel Guevara Calero. His killer, Mauro Francisco Cerda, an opposition man, told a version of events quite different from that proffered by the *New York Times*. Cerda told police investigators and observers from the U.N. and OAS that he and some associates went to Masatepe with machetes and bayonets under orders from UNO organizers. Cerda explained that when Chamorro finished speaking a whistle was blown, someone in the UNO crowd shouted, "Now," and the fighting began.

Of course, there are other avenues to the desired "fraud" charge. One member of an independent team of observers reckons that "the Bush administration will make a vigorous effort to disqualify the election on grounds of intimidation and then attempt to suggest fraudulence in the voter registration list." According to him, the groundwork is already being laid.

Here's how the operation is being planned. Currently working in Nicaragua is an outfit called the Institute for Electoral Promotion and Training (IPCE). The institute is receiving \$1.5 million from a grant made by the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) to the National Endowment for Democracy, a bipartisan U.S. organization funded by the U.S. Congress, supposedly dedicated to the promotion of democracy abroad and run by fanatical Cold Warriors, many of them with roots to organized labor in the AFL-CIO. The institute's grant was described by AID officials as one made to an autonomous, non-partisan body to "expound on the benefits of pluralism" and to "ensure the integrity of the electoral process by verifying voter registration lists and observing the casting and counting of ballots."

Talk of the institute's non-partisanship is bunk. Its five directors are all leaders of parties in the UNO coalition, and board member Alfredo Cesar has been prominent in the contras and is UNO presidential candidate Violeta Chamorro's principal adviser. Even the

### The New York Times sets the table and serves the appetizers

Just as the accompanying article was going to press, the *New York Times* furnished in a single op-ed piece a host of the lies being concocted to discredit the elections. The author of the column, published on February 12, was Robert Leiken, a few years ago a rabid flunky of Arturo Cruz and ghostwriter of some of his speeches and columns. In recent years Leiken has written some influential propaganda barrages against the Sandinistas in the *New Republic* and the *New York Review of Books*.

Leiken's work was important in rallying Democrats on Capitol Hill to the contras' support and in softening up liberal intellectuals. For the *Times* Leiken rewrote his old Cruz script—claiming that in Nicaragua today "huge crowds" are pouring out to support Violeta Chamorro and that victory is within her grasp. Part of his strategy here is to prepare the ground for charges that the election was fraudulent, claiming—should the Sandinistas win—that it was clear in the pre-election days that Chamorro was ahead.

Predictably, Leiken ignored nearly every poll except the Costa Rican affiliate of Gallup—actually Borge & Associates,

though Leiken does not name them—which has refused to divulge its methodology. Leiken repeated the *Times*' inaccurate account of the Masatepe incident and quoted very selectively from reports of the Organization of American States delegation and Jimmy Carter's observation team, suppressing positive statements from these groups about the fairness of the election procedures. Unsurprisingly, he cited the Puebla Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based group coaxed to its baneful activities with the blessings of the CIA.

Leiken noted the resignation of "some 348 opposition candidates" and identified the cause of the defections as "Sandinista bribes and intimidation." In fact, the 348 total represented all nominees for the ballots, including those disqualified because they were ineligible. Hemisphere Institute observer Jack Spence saw all the letters of resignation as of January 26. Just 141 belonged to members of the National Opposition Union (UNO) coalition; the remainder belonged to other parties. Although the U.N. found instances of Sandinista pressure in zones where contras recently attacked, of the 141, only one

letter cited pressure from Sandinista supporters. Several cited personal, health and business reasons, and another batch pointed to UNO's internal divisions, its relationship with former Somocistas, the contras and the U.S.

The evening of the day the *Times* featured Leiken's piece, Sergio Bendixen, a member of the Bipartisan Commission for Free and Fair Elections in Nicaragua—a project sponsored by the right-wing World Freedom Foundation—released a poll for the Spanish-language TV network Univision affirming Ortega's significant lead. No less than 92 percent responded affirmatively to the question, "I feel personally free to participate in any of the presidential campaigns on behalf of any candidate I choose."

The *Times*' coverage has been heavily weighted toward Chamorro and UNO. Peculiarly revolting have been the reports of Mark Uhlig, a clone of James "Electric Rabbit" Chace, formerly of the Carnegie Endowment and the Council on Foreign Relations. Uhlig's reporting is even worse—and far more stupid—than that which was provided by Stephen Kinzer. —A.C. & R.M.





c. Larry Boyd, Impact Visuals

Violeta Chamorro, presidential candidate of UNO, the National Opposition Union coalition, visits the Roberto Huembes market in Managua.

opposition newspaper *La Prensa* started bel-  
lowing about \$1.5 million missing from  
UNO's remittance from the U.S., and then  
found to its embarrassment that this was the  
money going to the institute.

The institute plans to recruit individuals  
at \$5 a day to go from household to house-  
hold to check the registration lists, which  
are public property. As one person familiar  
with the institute's activities puts it, "This  
type of checking is an activity over which  
there is no possible oversight."

A week before the voting, UNO could an-  
nounce the results of the institute's investi-  
gation as demonstrating that, say, 40 percent  
of registration was fraudulent, and thus  
create a pretext for the U.S. government to  
declare elections invalid. Others take the  
view that what is being funded here is not  
an attempt to verify voters but simply  
another effort by UNO to do door-to-door  
canvassing. An institute form purporting to  
verify registration begins with a greeting  
from UNO and ends by asking who the indi-  
vidual plans to vote for.

**Contingency plans:** Other end-runs  
around a possible Sandinista victory are  
being prepared. On February 1, U.S. Secre-  
tary of State James Baker testified to the Se-  
nate Foreign Relations Committee that, yes,  
the U.S. government would be prepared "to  
normalize our relations" with a Sandinista  
government winning elections on February  
25, "if we determine that it is free and fair,  
and we determine that they have indeed  
stopped their subversion of neighboring  
countries." Baker added that Washington  
would require "convincing evidence" that

the election is fair. Such convincing evi-  
dence, he remarked blandly, would be dif-  
ficult unless President Daniel Ortega rescin-  
ded his refusal to permit a U.S. congress-  
sional delegation to observe the voting.

This means that so long as the U.S. feels  
itself free to charge Nicaragua with support-  
ing the Salvadoran guerrillas—a charge  
levied without cease since Reagan's first  
secretary of state, Al Haig, made it on the  
basis of forged documents in the spring of  
1981—it matters not a whit how many elec-  
tions Nicaragua holds or how many indepen-  
dent observers declare these elections fairly  
conducted. And, of course, congressional  
delegates from the U.S. would never take the  
political risk of declaring a Nicaraguan elec-  
tion fairly conducted, since any U.S. politi-  
cian subscribing to such a statement would  
face the certainty of being eaten alive in their  
next race by an opponent charging him with

**It is not difficult to  
imagine a network TV  
news report on the night  
of February 25 beginning  
with the words:  
"Charges of harassment  
and ballot fraud marred  
what Sandinista leaders  
hail as a convincing  
victory."**

being a dupe of the Sandinista Commies.  
(Bright-eyed talk about the "end of the Cold  
War" has no relevance in such spheres of  
U.S. interest as Central or South America.)

The Nicaraguan government has refused  
to admit to the country groups who support  
the contras, thus excluding U.S. congress-  
sional delegations. A parallel to Baker's de-  
mand that such a delegation be admitted  
would be a demand during World War II that  
any British election be judged for its fairness  
by Nazi observers from Germany.

A complementary U.S. strategy was de-  
scribed by Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IN) in mid-  
January in Costa Rica. Lugar announced that  
"regardless" of the outcome of the election,  
the U.S. would require as "benchmarks for  
judging democratic progress in Nicaragua"  
such actions as "demobilization of the huge  
Sandinista army," a new constitution, a new  
judicial system and a new flag. As Nicaraguan  
Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto once re-  
marked, all the U.S. ever offers Nicaragua is  
a choice of methods by which Nicaragua can  
commit suicide.

**Ever onward:** So, as Ortega and his com-  
panions gallop across the hills of Chontales  
or glad-hand in the coffee ridges of  
Matagalpa or the cotton fields of the north-  
west recruiting support, what options does  
history really offer them, even as Chamorro  
and the UNO coalition stumble? Here is an  
election with about 6,000 people running for  
some 2,062 offices. The Nicaraguan govern-  
ment has thrown a large slice of the nation's  
pathetically scanty resources into the effort  
to conduct these elections with model de-  
corum and to show the world they are free.

Back in the early '80s they devoted similar  
efforts to bringing the U.S. to judgment in  
the World Court. The World Court found for  
Nicaragua, and the contra attacks did not  
diminish. The contragate scandal came and  
went, and contra attacks scarcely slowed.  
With the U.S. invasion of Panama came  
another blow as the U.S. shut down an impor-  
tant site for Nicaraguan trade and financial  
dealings.

The news for Nicaragua has so often  
looked bad that one often wonders how any  
Sandinista can face the new day without a  
shudder. But they do, with a kind of be-  
leaguered optimism that sometimes seems  
incomprehensible to an outsider.

They've seen 50,000 of their compatriots  
killed in the contra war, and then been be-  
rated by the U.S. government for not welcom-  
ing the people who voted the money for the  
killing. They've seen the Soviet Union, post  
end-of-Cold-War version, pledge to the U.S.  
no more arms shipments with which  
Nicaragua might defend itself. They've seen  
European Social Democrats, tumbling to dis-  
patch money to Eastern Europe, permit only  
the merest trickle of aid.

To soldier on through such adversities de-  
mands the kind of humorous endurance  
partly summed up in the words on the plinth  
of the statue of Sandino down by the old  
cathedral in Managua: "The workers and  
peasants will get there in the end." □

**Alexander Cockburn** is a columnist for *The Na-  
tion* and the *Wall Street Journal* and writes *In  
These Times'* biweekly column "Ashes & Dia-  
monds." **Richard McKerrow** is a British free-  
lance journalist.



# EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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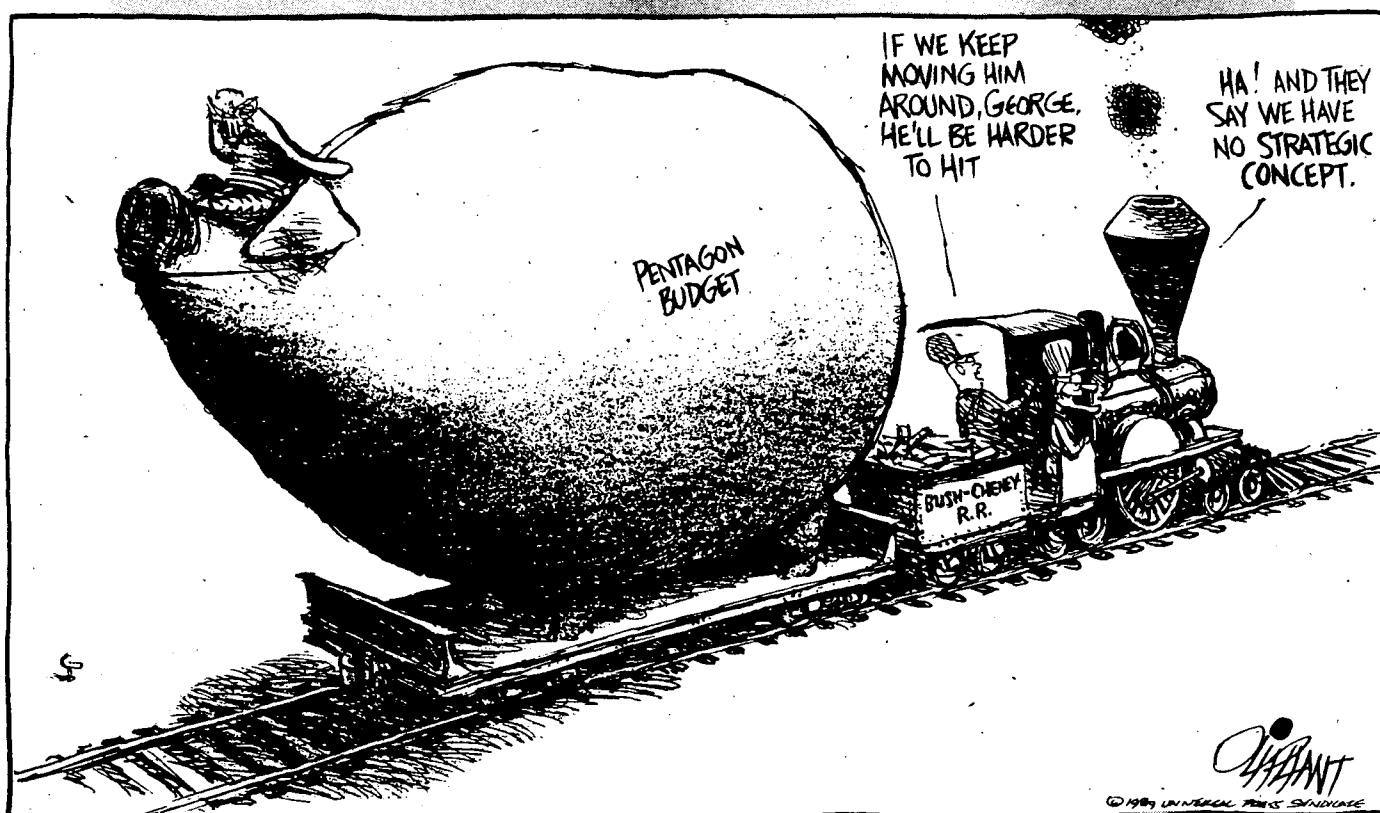
*In These Times* believes that to guarantee our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, Americans must take greater control over our nation's basic economic and foreign policy decisions. We believe in a socialism that fulfills rather than subverts the promise of American democracy, where social needs and rationality, not corporate profit and greed, are the operative principles. Our pages are open to a wide range of views, socialist and non-socialist, liberal and conservative. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

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## The time has come to begin planning for a demilitarized economy

With the Cold War at an end and a near-universal recognition that neither the Soviet Union nor any other nation threatens the United States, a large majority of the American people favor a drastic cut-back in our military establishment. Yet powerful corporate interests depend on arms research and production for their most profitable business and scores of local communities depend on military bases, as well as arms production, for their prosperity and stability. Forty years of military Keynesianism has institutionalized the military economy, creating dependency on spending for arms and military installations throughout American society. These dependencies, in turn, make it possible for the Bush administration to manipulate fears about the loss of jobs in order to frustrate popular desires for a more humane use of our public resources.

But it is not only the Bush administration's lack of will to convert the core of our economy to peaceful pursuits that constitutes a political barrier to a new set of federal social priorities. We also lack a means to stop the production of weapons systems and to close bases without massive layoffs and the disruption of communities' economies. To make large-scale disarmament a realistic goal, we must plan for conversion to production for social needs in a manner that minimally disrupts the lives and livelihoods of the millions of people now working in, or dependent on, military establishments.

So far, the president has acted as if this problem doesn't exist. And the Democratic leadership in Congress, while complaining about Bush's arms requests, also remains oblivious. But Rep. Ted Weiss (D-NY) and 63 other House members are sponsoring the Defense Economic Adjustment Act (H.R. 101), aimed at providing viable civilian alternatives to military spending and limiting the economic dislocation resulting from cancellation of military contracts. The bill,

which Weiss had introduced in the previous Congress, has so far been ignored by the House leadership and by the media, yet it is the only initiative that attempts to confront what is certain to become a major problem facing our nation.

Weiss' bill outlines procedures for transforming redundant weapons plants and bases into productive use for the civilian economy, and it provides income support and training for affected workers. The plan contains the following key components:

- The creation of alternative-use committees at large defense facilities. Composed of labor and management representatives, these committees are charged by the act to develop plans for alternative civilian use.
- The creation of a Cabinet-level Defense Economic Adjustment Council charged with developing plans for public projects that address human needs. The council also is charged with acting as a clearinghouse for existing federal programs relevant to communities affected by military cutbacks and with publishing a guidebook for local conversion planners.
- One year's advance notification of plans to cut back or terminate a military contract or base.
- Adjustment assistance for communities and workers while conversion is underway. Communities seriously affected by military cutbacks would be eligible for federal planning assistance, and individual workers would be eligible for adjustment benefits, including funds for retraining.

Weiss' purpose is not only to ease the transition away from a militarized economy but also to direct the money saved from decreased military expenditures to use in rebuilding our infrastructure, cleaning up the environment and other desirable governmental activities. His bill, of course, is no panacea. But it would be an important step in the direction of social responsibility by our political representatives. At present the bill is before the House Subcommittee on Economic Stabilization, chaired by Mary Rose Oaker (D-OH). Hearings are not yet scheduled, and it would help for our representatives to hear from constituents who would like to see action on the bill by the House. We urge you to let Oaker and your own congressman know what you think on this issue.



# LETTERS

## Call me

ON A COUPLE OF OCCASIONS WITHIN THE PAST year I searched out and contacted progressive speakers touring the country promoting progressive causes. On both occasions I was able to advance their causes by providing sleeping accommodations as well as serving as a media advance person.

Radio talk shows, public-access cable, a local newspaper and local forum groups all responded. (Their messages thus spread far beyond the usual left quire.) It is my impression that all too little of this sort of cooperation exists on the left.

The progressive press is in a position to make a qualitative difference in promoting a continentwide network of readers willing to host and/or do similar public relations for all sorts of progressive causes.

This could be accomplished through the following process: each progressive newspaper or magazine would solicit those readers willing to volunteer their homes and/or efforts to allow their names, addresses and/or telephone numbers to be published in a yearly list appearing in the cooperating periodicals. Such volunteers could then be solicited by organizations or speakers wishing to appear in their areas, perhaps also simply to activists crossing the country on vacation.

A simple phone call or letter could then establish whether the listee would be willing to play host or more. Such an effort would dramatically expand our organizing both locally and nationally.

So how 'bout it, progressive media?

A. Robert Kaufman  
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Baltimore, Md. 21216  
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## Score one for power sex

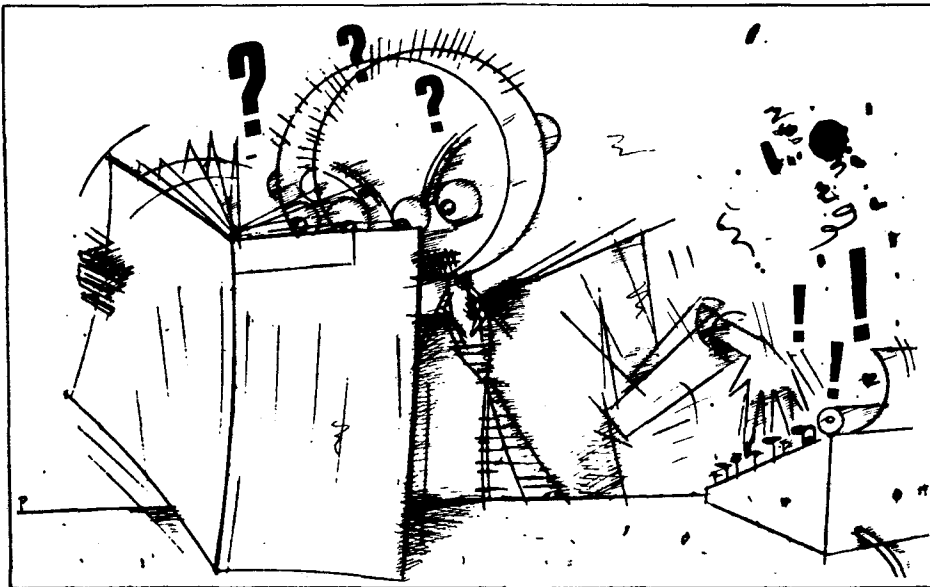
WHEW! JUST READ MURRAY L. BOB'S "NEW AGE just new page in old book" (*ITT*, Jan. 13). Talk about a scathing indictment! Joseph Campbell, mysticism, creative visualization, holistic healing, Native American earth wisdom, "primitive people" (sic)—nailed to the proverbial wall! But to what does the writer attribute this mass retreat by well-educated people into the ancient teachings? To a failure of our schools to "instill" youth with the capacity for "rational thinking." Gee, Murray, sounds to me like you've bought in to the myth of Reason. Give me *Creatively Imaging Power Sex with a Goddess While Recovering from an Addiction to Visionary Healing* any day.

R.L. Fisher  
Rye, N.Y.

## Live embers

JULIA GILDEN'S PIECE ON THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS of the World (IWW)/Earth First! connection (*ITT*, Jan. 17) succeeded in laying to rest two of the most common misconceptions people have about the Wobblies.

The first, of course, is that we're no longer around. As her article amply demonstrates, we're still busy organizing workers in those industries that the AFL-CIO has either betrayed or entirely ignored. Whether it's timberworkers of the Northwest, who've been left to twist in the wind by the International Woodworkers of America leadership, or Berkeley recyclers, who would never have considered affiliating with the business unions



anyway, Wobblies are still alive and kicking.

The second misconception, held by those who know we exist, is that, as Gilden puts it, we're little more than "an historical society that carries the faded flame of anarcho-syndicalist ideals." Or worse, that we're a macho crew of factory fetishists with no more vitality than the ashes of old Joe Hill himself. Yet Gilden clearly shows that we've incorporated the relatively recent lessons of the environmental and feminist movements more thoroughly than any other labor union. The preservation of smoke-stack industries is *not* on our agenda—saving the planet, as well as redefining the very nature of work, is.

But in her enthusiasm to paint us in a modern light, her broad, impressionistic brush strokes managed to smudge some important details. Some of her facts were just plain wrong. For instance, McCarthyism notwithstanding, we have a number of members in their 60s. Nor did our members "flee the country" after World War I—they were jailed and later deported along with thousands of other immigrant radicals during the xenophobic hysteria of the Palmer raids.

Most ludicrous is her assertion that "Wobblies believe government should be conducted through economic ... representation." This is a self-canceling phrase with no basis in fact or history. The IWW has traditionally fought against the economic exploitation of wage slavery with economic tactics they could control themselves, namely direct action at the point of production. We've never relied on politicians to fight our battles for us, for we know all too well in whose hip pocket they reside. As for the eventual administration of any future "cooperative commonwealth," there are as many utopian visions as Wobblies themselves.

Jess A. Grant  
San Francisco

## Job insecurity

PEOPLE HAVE ASKED ME HOW I CAN SAY, "IT'S A fraud to tell people they'd be more secure with a union" ("Workers knock out chemical giant," *ITT*, Jan. 24) and work as a union organizer. So an explanation is needed.

I said that under U.S. National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) jurisdiction it is a fraud to tell workers that they will necessarily be more secure if they try to organize a union. The logic is simple. If management fires workers who are organizing a union (using other pretenses, of course), the likelihood of getting their jobs back is so small and the delay so long—averaging five years—that it's dishonest to say the law will fully protect their right to organize. The fallacy of relying exclusively on our management-controlled legal system is, I believe, obvious.

When unions file unfair labor practice charges against employers, the NLRB cites employers for violations of law in fewer than one-third of the cases. In 90 percent of the cases where a complaint is issued, the NLRB will "settle" the case with the company; however, unions cannot block an unfair or unfavorable settlement. More often than not, management only has to post a notice on the plant bulletin board instead of paying damages plus legal costs. Moreover, workers cannot get a settlement reviewed in federal court.

If a case makes it past these two obstacles, the complaint goes before an administrative law judge and can be appealed to a panel of NLRB members appointed by the president. Some cases will make it to the federal appeals courts, but there is strong pressure to settle, especially if you've lost your job.

In the BASF lockout the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) recognized early on that the NLRB was going to allow BASF

a free hand to crush their workers' freedom of association. BASF was allowed to engage in a practice never before thought possible: permanently replacing locked-out workers, thereby going non-union at will. Despite completely new issues of law never before tested in the courts, the NLRB general counsel refused to issue a complaint in response to more than 50 charges filed by OCAW. OCAW was unable to seek relief through the courts because decisions of the NLRB general counsel, no matter how outrageous or contrary to law, are never reviewable—a clever little provision in the Taft-Hartley Act.

OCAW's only choice was to build strategic conditions to attack BASF locally, nationally and internationally. Yet it took five and a half years to force BASF to rehire those workers who were locked out and fired.

With some noteworthy exceptions, it was environmental and community groups, not unions, that were OCAW's most loyal and valuable allies. Sadly, the building and trades unions frequently rejected solidarity with OCAW because this may have meant losing potential construction or maintenance contracts with BASF. Certain craft unions saw OCAW's demise at BASF as an opportunity for themselves.

Community organizing has given OCAW a support base in southern Louisiana that may translate into a more favorable labor organizing climate. Usually it is the family, not just individual workers, who make a decision to join a union. Organizing away from the workplace first may open doors that would otherwise be closed.

Here's the tricky problem. Chemical industry workers perceive the agenda of "environmentalists" as a threat to their jobs, unless they are at war with management. However, if the coalition-building process, which strengthens the union's hand in dealing with the union-busting employer, also scares away potential members in non-union chemical-industry plants, the benefits of building community-based campaigns may be limited to union organizing drives where workers see health and safety or environmental problems as something a unionized shop can help address.

Richard Miller  
OCAW Local 4620  
Baton Rouge, La.

**Editor's note:** Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

## SYLVIA

### the interpretation of DREAMS



## by Nicole Hollander



I DREAMT THAT I INVITED WILLIAM BENNETT TO MY HOUSE FOR DESSERT OVER PEARS AND Brie, I suggested THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAGE AN ALL-OUT WAR ON BANKS THAT LAUNDER DRUG MONEY. "YOU PEOPLE CAN'T EVEN SERVE A GOOD DESSERT, DON'T TELL ME HOW TO RUN A DRUG WAR! DON'T YOU HAVE ANY MICROWAVE BROWNIES?" HE SCREAMED. MY THERAPIST SAYS I'M AT WAR WITH MY FEMININE, NURTURING SELF.



The following is an edited version of a speech given by James Petras at the Conference on Rethinking Marxism held December 2 at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

By James Petras

**T**WO RECENT EVENTS DRAMATICALLY illustrate the contradictions of contemporary political reality. One involves Lech Walesa begging the U.S. Congress for loans and investment, offering up for sale Polish industries, resources and labor. The mass media and politicians celebrated this plea as marking the "end of socialism," noting that the working class of the East had pronounced itself as a partisan of free enterprise—the only road toward progress, growth and democracy.

As Walesa addressed Congress, the people of El Salvador were engaged in a national insurrection: workers and peasants—unwilling to submit to a regime of free enterprise and machine guns—fought in a life-and-death struggle against the U.S.-financed death squads and generals. The massive uprising clearly underlines the failure of capitalism to deal with the fundamental social needs of the vast majority of Central American people.

The crises left by Stalinism in the East are matched by the failure of free enterprise in the South. The major difference is that while a peaceful transition has proven possible in the former Soviet sphere, such transition in the South is blocked by West-

## The political contradictions of progress and democracy

ern-backed terrorist regimes. The mass media's selective presentation of one face of reality—its exclusive focus on the crisis of communism—obscures the duality of crisis in the contemporary world.

**Contradictions of the anti-Stalinist movements:** The anti-Stalinist movements are made up of contradictory social classes, conflicting ideologies and incompatible social priorities. These movements possess an ambiguity frequently glossed over in the West. The ambiguity flows from the term "freedom," with which all of the movements define themselves. While the movements themselves are clear in what they want to be free from, there is no clarity in what they want to be free for—what kind of social order, political authority or economic system they desire.

Thus the movements in the East represent both historical opportunity and danger. Insofar as the anti-communist outpouring unlocked civil society, repoliticized the populace and organized autonomous movements, it has undermined the police-state structures that prevented the emergence of democracy. There is, however, no automatic connection between the demise of police states and the emergence of democracy, socialist or liberal. Post-Stalinist

societies are now up for grabs. Initially, in fact, new forms of domination are emerging. Chauvinist ethnic majorities lord over minorities, and a new political class of technocrats, upwardly mobile intellectuals, freebooter capitalists and *compradores* facilitate the selling-off of national patrimony (a la Walesa).

But the direct result of integration of Eastern Europe into the West and the introduction of free-market economic policies will almost inevitably provoke a "second wave" of class conflict. In this sense, the Western celebration of the restoration of "market democracies" could be premature: inequality, unemployment, declining living standards and diminution of social and workplace rights that emerge with free-market restoration will provoke resistance. The naive expectations of free-market ideologues and technocrats that "integration" into Western Europe will result in high growth rates and modernization overlook the disastrous experiences in neighboring Yugoslavia, a pioneer in market socialism that has four-digit inflation, a currency that has declined 50-fold in three years and an unpayable debt.

The prospects for a peaceful transition from bureaucratic collectivism to bourgeois electoral regimes are poor. Liberal democrats and market economists lack strong traditions or institutional bases in most of Eastern Europe. Given the historical strength of nationalist and populist forces it is likely that the political process will move quickly beyond liberal democracy with free markets. Post-liberal politics may just as likely result in the emergence of authoritarian clerical nationalism or even a neo-Stalinist revivalism.

What is clear is that new market policies in the East combine the worst vices of state monopolies and Western unregulated prices, unemployment and job insecurity. Eastern ideologues have consumed the free-market ideology of Western capitalism, not the state regulated and directed capitalist practices of Western Europe and Japan. In this sense they follow in the footsteps of the Latin American elites and are likely to suffer the same consequences. Contrary to the wishes of the Eastern free-market advocates and Western publicists, we are likely to see the Latin-Americanization of Eastern Europe—a region that may be hegemonized and plundered by the West through a class of privileged national political intermediaries who organize a docile cheap-labor market and sell off national resources. In such an explosive context, round two of the popular struggle may resurface and a revitalized working-class socialist movement re-emerge.

**Decline of liberal-electoral market regimes in Latin America:** The most common term used to describe the '80s is the "lost decade." Under the aegis of free-market economic practices and deep structural integration into the financial and investment circuits of Western capitalism, Latin America has experienced its worst crises of the 20th century: incomes have

plummeted to the levels of the early '60s and continue to fall; malnutrition has become endemic; and inflation rates have reached four digits.

Economic stagnation has become the norm as the open economies have allowed for the ascendancy of speculative capital, ecological pillage and massive capital flight. Out of this matrix of real existing free enterprises, massive social movements have emerged that challenge the power of the market and its practitioners. Unlike the peaceful exit of communist regimes under the benign eye of the Soviets, the liberal electoral regimes—conservative and social democratic—have resorted to mass violence and state terror to sustain their market economies and to uphold their neoclassical dogma. Alan Garcia, the social democratic president in Peru, has presided over the most repressive period in recent Peruvian history with more than 16,000 people killed. Carlos Andres Perez, the Venezuelan social democratic president, has violently suppressed citizens protesting his orthodox austerity measures, leaving more than 1,500 people dead in Caracas and elsewhere. In Central America, Christian Democrats and conservative electoral regimes have taken turns with the military in the wholesale slaughter of opponents of free-market economic policies.

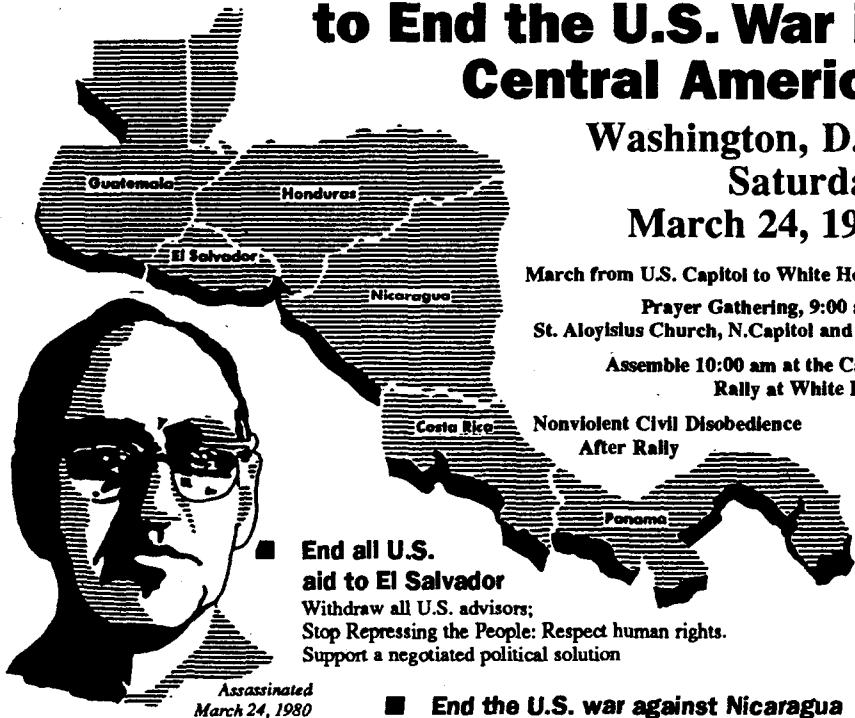
Throughout Latin America there is massive opposition to the "elite-export" economic model and its Western backers. Accompanying this opposition is widespread disaffection with the ruling liberal electoral regimes. Movements against Western-style free enterprise are on the ascendancy everywhere.

In Mexico, Cuauhtemoc Cardenas won last year's presidential election (with an estimated 55 percent of the vote in Mexico City alone) only to have it stolen by the pro-U.S. Salinas-PRI mafia. In Brazil the Workers Party, supported by trade unions and neighborhood organizations, has, in its programmatic challenge to the Western bankers and their local counterparts, become the chosen party of tens of millions of Brazilian voters. In Uruguay, the Socialist Broad Front has won the mayoralty of Montevideo, an historical first. In Peru the electoral and guerrilla left are a growing force among millions of discontented Peruvian peasants and urban poor, battered by the operations of the free market. In Central America the pro-free enterprise contras have been decisively defeated, and mass movements in El Salvador and, to a lesser extent, in Guatemala have demonstrated a tremendous resiliency in reconstructing popular power in the face of genocidal repression.

Increasingly, the pro-Western free-market policies of electoral regimes have led to a deeper political polarization. The liberal-social democrats' right turn in economic policy and the militarization of political life have led to the disintegration of the political center. The early euphoria that accompanied the emergence of liberal democracy has given way to profound antagonism in which bankers and exporters linked to the West are increasingly looking to impose authoritarian solutions—a kind of neo-Stalinist capitalism in which opening markets is accompanied by expanding prisons. On the other side, the socio-political

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Saturday,  
March 24, 1990



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Assemble 10:00 am at the Capitol  
Rally at White House  
Nonviolent Civil Disobedience  
After Rally

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Withdraw all U.S. advisors;  
Stop Repressing the People: Respect human rights.  
Support a negotiated political solution

■ **End the U.S. war against Nicaragua**  
Respect Nicaragua's election; End the contra war  
Lift the trade embargo and normalize relations

■ **Cut military spending; Fund human needs**

■ **No Invasions**  
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# VIEWPOINT

movements are moving beyond liberalism and the failures of capitalism in search of alternative popular based and nationally controlled socio-economic systems.

While state Stalinism declines in the East, a version of free enterprise Stalinism has emerged in the West as liberal market economies collapse under the weight of pillage, debt and capital flight. The collapse of the liberal-market regime, however, brings in its wake several historical alternatives—the emergence of death-squad democracies, democratic socialism, or further disintegration. The refusal of the West, and particularly of the U.S., to disengage from the South has made the process of transition extremely costly.

**East-West detente; North-South conflict:** As the Soviet empire disintegrates, the U.S. intensifies its efforts to retain control over its client states and to expand its influence in contested areas. The key to understanding the new detente is non-reciprocity in which Washington defines Soviet "reforms" in terms of cooperation in facilitating recovery of U.S. hegemony.

The Soviets have accepted the transformation of Poland from a communist-dominated regime beholden to the Kremlin to a parliamentary capitalist regime intent on establishing deep structural ties with the West. In this process, Moscow did not intervene in Poland's electoral process or organize or advocate armed intervention to undermine its transition to capitalism. In contrast, the U.S. has financed a decade-long military effort to restore its political clients in Nicaragua—it has organized an economic embargo, mined the harbors and authored a text on the assassination of political opponents. As the electoral process unfolds, Washington has allocated \$8 million to subsidize client groups there.

The contrasting response in Soviet-Polish and U.S.-Nicaraguan relations are emblematic of a global pattern. While hundreds of thousands of Czechs and East Germans launched peaceful revolutions, in one day six Jesuits were killed in El Salvador, subsequent to the murder of 10 trade union leaders. While communist powers withdraw from Cambodia, Washington and its allies continue or increase their support to the Pol Pot-led opposition. While the Soviets decrease their military support for Syria and urge Palestinian acceptance of Israel, the U.S. does nothing to prevent Israeli violence against unarmed protesters against its annexation policies.

Similar patterns can be seen in Africa. Soviet concessions in southern Africa are not reciprocated—rather, the West interprets Soviet withdrawal as weakness and as an opportunity to push harder to establish Western hegemony. Soviet-U.S. detente may lessen tensions in the North while increasing them in the South, prolonging struggles by strengthening the forces of violence and exacerbating the conditions of exploitation. Today, peace is tested in human rights and social struggles in Managua, San Salvador, Luanda and Phnomh Penh—not in Warsaw, Budapest and Berlin.

Real disarmament would begin with large-scale cutbacks in conventional arms to Western clients who have murdered 100,000 Indians and peasants in Guatemala, hundreds of thousands of Angolans and Mozambicans, and 50,000 Nicaraguans. In

the Third World, American-style free enterprise has been rejected by the vast majority: it should not be allowed to keep shooting its way to power.

**Inter-imperial rivalries and the decline of the U.S.:** Profound crises confront capitalism in the South, but emerging and deepening divisions among the major capitalist countries threaten more immediately to disrupt the system. While the role of the state has declined in the U.S., multinational corporations have expanded. This disjuncture between the power of the state and capital means, in effect, that all the costs of reproduction and defense of capital are borne by the state (and by the working taxpayers), while profits, interests and rents are accrued internationally. Concomitantly, the ascendancy of fictitious capital and the decline of industrial capital has led to the decimation of the industrial working class, which, in turn, has destabilized the family and created the basis for the massive drug economy and the routinization of crime. In this sense, crime and drugs are class questions rooted in the profound and far-reaching consequences of the transition from industrial to fictitious capital. Unless the issues of the ascendancy of fictitious capital and the fragmentation of the working class are tackled, all the anti-drug campaigns and civilian patrols in the world will not prevent the production and reproduction of the drug economy.

Intellectual fashions notwithstanding, the primary reality of politics in the West has been the centrality of the class struggle—class war from the top. Massive transfers of wealth, through wage constraints, have intensified production. And the lowering of social payments has been accompanied by the wholesale pillaging of the state through tax subsidies, bank bailouts and corrupt contracting. Today more than ever, class predominates in defining politics. The centrality of class rule over the state is transparent in the intervention and defeat of one major union struggle after another—air controllers, machinists, miners. Business unionism and class collaboration—tri-partite cooperation among business, state and labor has been replaced by bi-partite action to eliminate unions or subordinate them to the needs of international capitalist competition.

The state's frontal attack on labor and the process of subordinating labor to international capitalist competition has undermined the myth about the autonomy of the state. The daily workings of real existing capitalist states have forced all the contemporary social movements—women's movements, black community movements, environmental movements—to confront the central issue of the economy and the capitalist class that controls it and shapes our social priorities. More specifically, the ascendancy of fictitious capital provides few opportunities for black employment, has no use for health and day-care allocations and sees the environment merely as another commodity to strip and sell. Insofar as these social movements move toward confronting the root source of oppression and degradation, they must confront the class character of the state and the organization of economic power.

**Political struggle in the 1990s:** Just as the massive uprising of the Salvadoran

popular guerrilla movement buried the pretensions of those who announced the triumph of capitalism in El Salvador, so the dense network of grass-roots organizations that permeate civil society in the U.S. attest to the vitality of the popular struggle against the supremacy of the state. The strengths and weaknesses of U.S. politics are evidenced in this dual reality: nowhere in the Western world is there such an extensive network of organizational activity directed toward defending individual and collective interests from the depredations and neglect of the capitalist state as in the U.S. And, at the same time, nowhere in the Western world is there such a thorough absence of political representation of working-class or popular interests in the national structures of political power—in the executive branch, Congress or political parties. There is a profound disjuncture between the democratic movements in civil society and the closed, monolithic political structures that monopolize national political life. Political struggle in the '90s must move from the realm of civil society to political action, from local grass-roots pressure groups to independent political alternatives, from a one-party to a multiparty system and from a monolithic media to pluralism.

The key point of departure for consequential political change must be a break with the two factions of the one-party system. From Truman in Korea to Kennedy and Johnson in Vietnam to Carter in Central America, the Democratic Party has been the centerpiece of war in the Third World. While big city Democrats talk to the left, they work for and are financed by the real estate developers and financial interests, as a quick glance at the campaign financing of the Democratic mayors in the recent elections attests. Reagan's budget cuts alone did not create the low-paid service sector of the working class or the homeless. The big-city Democrats, black and white, played a major role: the alliance between the Democrats and speculator capitalism in Detroit, Atlanta, Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and Boston led to the massive urban displacement of low-income housing, industrial manufacturing and the expansion of downtown office buildings, high-rent condos and the exploitation of low-income "illegal labor" in the service sector.

The reemergence of substantial opposition in the U.S.—as has been true since the '30s—occurs through extra-electoral mobilization. Industrial unionism came about because of the CIO and the massive wave of

direct action in the factories and streets. Civil rights and urban reforms came about because of massive black street protests and urban uprisings. The Vietnam War ended because of massive disruption of troop trains and state business. More recently, the rush to reverse women's rights was set back on its heels by the massive march of women in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere. It is clear that there is a powerful and effective reservoir and tradition of political action embedded in civil society which has emerged time and again in moments of crisis and is doing so again.

But with all of its strength, mass direct action is single-issue pressure politics and does not transform the institutions that perpetuate the problems. When the movements ebb, as they must with time, the politicians and institutions begin to revert back to serving the masters of property and wealth, now chipping away at the reforms (liberals), now salvaging whole programs (conservatives). In a word, pressure politics doesn't build structures that can sustain and deepen the changes fought for and initiated by sacrifices and struggles. Movement politics are like Sisyphus pushing the stone of reform up the hill and having it fall back as it approaches the crest. To go over the top, a new political movement—one that learns from the positive side of the Eastern European experience, one that rejects compromises with the current corrupt one-party system (including its liberal face), that pressures relentlessly for access to the mass media and seeks to break the political monopoly of real estate and financial capital—must be built.

A new left political movement must embrace the environmental and women's movements, place the black and white working class at the core of its politics and focus its energies on common adversaries—the capitalist class that controls the means of pollution, the sources of employment discrimination and unemployment, and the means of propaganda. We, too, can take courage from the movements in Central America who have said "Enough!" and who are prepared to carry the struggle to its ultimate consequences. Let us draw on the best traditions and practices of the anti-capitalism of the South and the anti-Stalinism of the East and build a truly democratic society rooted in our own traditions and anchored in the strength of civil society.

James Petras is a sociology professor at SUNY-Binghamton, N.Y.

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*"The most dangerous woman in America" is how detractors described legendary labor organizer Mary Harris Jones, known as Mother Jones. It all depends which side you're on, of course. Feminist writer Meridel LeSueur remembers Mother Jones' power of love and fierce determination. This account is drawn from LeSueur's preface to the new edition of The Autobiography of Mother Jones, published by Charles H. Kerr.*

By Meridel LeSueur

I SAW MOTHER JONES WHEN I WAS 14 years old. I marched with her, after the Ludlow Massacre, down the streets of Fort Scott, Kan., where she had come with the miners whose wives and children had been shot down by John D. Rockefeller during the Colorado strike of 1914.

It was a time before the first world war when exploitation of workers was worldwide as capitalism moved to consolidate its power against the world movement of workers who cried out for socialism. Miners worked 16 hours underground in

## ORGANIZING

hazardous conditions. John L. Lewis said the number of miners killed in the mines would circle the earth twice, two abreast.

The faculty of the People's College, a worker's education college, marched. I held my mother's hand and marched beside her among the miners whose families had been killed. There was no band. This little woman, Mother Jones, marched in the front line with her "boys." They were going across America to tell about the massacre and to raise money for the survivors of the broken strike.

It was a solemn tread as they marched, their bodies bent as if the Earth still rested on them. They were gaunt Armenians and Greeks. My mother was weeping. People stood on the walks along the line of march, some weeping, and some ran out to grasp their hands and some stood meanly or looked down from windows.

I wept too, seeing bodies bearing the mark of their oppression, of their stolen labor, mourning their holy dead.

I knew then I saw a woman of the future, a kind of being I wanted to be like. She was small but powerful, walking boldly in her black shoes, dressed like my grandma, a black full skirt and black shirtwaist, with a white fissa around her Irish face, and on her graying hair a little black hat like my grandma always wore. Women wore hats like St. Peter told them to. Even Mother Jones!

I had heard how the miners smuggled her by train into Trinidad, Colo., early in the strike. I had heard how the Rockefeller militia had arrested the tiny woman for supporting the workers' struggle. I had heard how

## Mother Jones and the global family



Meridel LeSueur remembers Mother Jones (right): "I saw a woman of the future."

these thugs on the payroll of Colorado Fuel and Iron attacked the strikers' unarmed wives and children with machine guns and bombs—and how they horribly, brutally murdered the miners' leader, Louis Tikas. And I knew that Mother Jones was barnstorming the country speaking boldly against the Goliath for her fallen comrades.

The only fighter I had seen like her was Eugene Debs, and I felt they were leaders of the future because they were the first people I had seen with love. They were of, and came from, the wounds of the people, not as saviors from above or outside but with speech and images of the American workers and farmers. They were the first so-called organizers I saw who embraced you. With their bodies they were alive to all the wounded and knew the wick that was to be ignited. I saw then I wanted to be part of a witness for my people.

I'll never forget that evening in the workers' hall. We sang together "Solidarity Forever" and later danced and embraced the fathers of the dead children.

Mother Jones spoke. I had never heard a woman speak like that, without ego or superiority of thought or education. She used the language we all used, and I always felt the workers and farmers in the Midwest were the great poets, their language and cadence drawn from the prairie work and relationship.

She summoned the images of our

life and silence and struggle and invoked the muscular and impassioned fight and love for each other. We came alive as if touched by her mother flame. She seemed to nourish us, expel our fears, make fun of our so-called losing the strike. "You never lose a strike," she said. "You frighten the robbers and arm yourselves and your brothers." She scolded them like a mother for their timidity and fear and praised the farmers who had grabbed their squirrel guns to march to Trinidad. She made us a family endangered but powerful.

I never lost that image of that struggle. I felt engendered by the true mother, not the private mother of one family but the emboldened and blazing defender of all her sons and daughters, the true warriors and only defenders. I saw a woman not needing feminine guilt or feeling frightened or embarrassed or belittled.

My mother was a feminist. There were many socialist feminist leaders and theoreticians who told us what was true and what to do. But here was a bold, skilled, eloquent, unafraid woman, no apologist, nor wanting male powers. I saw that she and Debs were American leaders of a truly democratic future and teachers of the true American history, the history of free holders of the land and of brave workers like the Chicago anarchists of the 1880s who had been hanged for fighting

for the eight-hour day. Like Debs, Mother Jones invoked the memories of the workers not taught in schools or lecture halls.

They did not only teach, preach and point out. They loved the land, the struggle and the workers; farmers and miners were to them the light of the world, the carriers of all true knowledge. We were the hope of the future, comrades of the coming new day. She made you feel the true motherhood of the Earth and struggle. "You are the ones," she said, "who can say the word 'solidarity.' And call each other comrades. The oppressor can claim nothing but his greed."

I not only remember what she said that day and her indomitable body like a lighted wick from which we all took light; I also remember that she embraced us and called us by name. As a matter of fact, she and Debs were the only ones I remember who taught us the true embrace of the endangered comrade, the fighter by our side, the only illumination in the dark criminal death of capitalism.

Embracing was not common among the puritan socialists. My father was not for men embracing men or women.

It was a tradition that, when Debs spoke, four little girls in white were to go to the platform and give him one red rose. I looked forward to this, and the tall prophetic Debs would lean down to us and embrace

us and kiss us. It was truly an embrace, truly a gesture of love, as if he fathered you as no father did.

Everyone hearing Mother Jones that day felt her loving expression of strength, love and beauty of the working class.

I have met people who remember what Debs said, and Mother Jones' love. She gave them the word, the image, embrace, out of their own wounds.

We saw you need not cringe before the formidable enemy. She was not what is called womannish, waiting for praise. She also had no class fear. She appeared before the potentates—the despoilers, as she called them, the predators—like an angry mother, admonishing them to be human, if they could, to admit the union, to let the workers live.

The radical movement was not without its male chauvinists. Radical women were often put in menial jobs, belittled. She spoke up to the bureaucrats, the kings of labor, the stool pigeons, the hoarders like the Rockefellers, who claimed they did not know how the workers lived, and shamed them into making huge grants and starting libraries to hide their greed and guilt.

I must also say how she spoke to the working woman, who was doubly exploited. You did not see many organizers in the kitchen or caring for the children. In her being and in her speeches Mother Jones roused the spirit of the working-class women, and the family, and the love of comrades.

For a woman to speak publicly was hard to do and not common. Even in my time men got up and left and had meetings in the hall when a woman had the floor.

At the time, middle-class oppression gave a class image and sexual inferiority to women and made a cult of the elite, the superior persons. Women reflected their oppressor. They were oppressed even in the unions by the male power structure. The patriarchal image engendered images of the female as salable, frivolous. Sexual prostitution as well as marriage oppressed the woman. Mother Jones embodied and made visible a future woman, a warrior also, equal in struggle beside men.

She spoke to me and made visible, when I was 14, the true nature of the female power as equal and nourishing and necessary to the making of the human being of the future. The woman, she said, must be equal in the future communal expression of a global family. In the form and force of being a woman, the reflecting power of women, the conceiving power of not only the future child but of the communal desire and gestation, embracing our humanity, our passionate strength and love.

No one who heard her or saw her forgot her. Such a catalyst as Mother Jones lives in us all—a matron of the living seed, the living protein of the love of comrades. ■



## Witkiewicz: a tragic end and a new beginning

By Larry O'Connor

**T**HE SEMINAL IMPORTANCE OF dramatist-philosopher Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz to the cultural life of early 20th-century Poland is beyond question. Since the late '50s, the mad, complicated genius who committed suicide in the face of the invading Soviet army at the outset of World War II has been celebrated as the father of Polish experimental theater and a visionary whose plays and novels foreshadowed the works of George Orwell, Eugène Ionesco, Samuel Beckett and a whole generation of European thinkers and writers.

But the man known to most Poles simply as "Witkacy" was also a prolific painter, accomplishing more than 3,000 works of art during his life. Whether they were of any lasting value is something that haunted Witkiewicz and still divides critics 50 years after his death. Visitors to Warsaw recently got a chance to view a representative selection of 645 Witkacy paintings at the National Museum of Poland and to decide for themselves.

**This strange existence:** Witkiewicz is numbered among the Polish formists, a close-knit salon of painters influenced by a mixture of cubism, expressionism and Polish folklore. Clearly the group's chief theoretician, Witkiewicz was a proponent of "pure form" not only in painting but in theater and poetry as well. A radical rejectionist of 19th-century realism, he postulated that the artist's goal was to soothe the universal anxiety he called "the metaphysical feeling of the strangeness of existence." And the goal could be reached, he said, only with the freedom to deform reality in hopes of arriving at pure form.

The Witkiewicz exhibit, the first major showing of his art in 22 years and the most comprehensive to date, encompasses all phases of the artist's work: his still lifes and landscapes, as well as selections of his photography and some 200 of the artist's bizarre and often eccentrically pornographic drawings.

The show features hundreds of his pastel portraits. The simplest of them might seem little more than the work of a competent sketch artist, yet closer inspection shows a heightened intensity of images, which he dubbed "hyperrealism." Other portraits, however, are fantastically abstract, with grotesque exaggerations and wild colors, the most striking of which Witkiewicz painted under the influence of various mind-altering substances—cocaine, mescaline, hashish, peyote—all dutifully recorded on canvas.

While the exhibition has been well received by the public, there re-



Witkiewicz' style: from "hyperrealism" to gross exaggeration.

mains no consensus among critics and historians.

"You either esteem him very highly or your evaluation is just to the contrary," says Anna Zakiewicz.

### ART

an art historian who helped with the exhibition. "But one cannot be indifferent to him."

**Genre bleed-through:** For Zakiewicz, the artist has long been underrated, in part because of the fuzzy

**There is an enduring mystique to the life and macabre art of Witkiewicz that transcends the lingering debate over his artistic accomplishments.**

delineation between art and literature in his own work. His drawings, for example, which are often accompanied by written passages of varying length, can be viewed as a mixture of artforms.

"It's hard to say whether they are of the artistic sphere or literature. They could be a scene from a film or a play. Or they could just be a philosophical comment on life and art."

There are also so many connections between one painting and another or between a painting and a photograph or drawing, she says, that exploring the aesthetics of single work may be the wrong approach.

But there is a mystique to the life and macabre death of Witkiewicz that transcends lingering debate over his artistic accomplishment. Born in Warsaw in 1885 the son of Stanislaw Witkiewicz, a noted architect, painter and art critic, Witkiewicz spent his youth in Zakopane in the picturesque mountains of southern Poland. (Since both were painters, the younger Witkiewicz adopted the name "Witkacy" to avoid confusion.) He studied art and traveled widely as a young man and served as an officer in the Russian army during World War I. At the end of the war he lived through the Russian Revolution, which to him was painfully frightful.

The unsettling experiences in the East made a lifelong impression on

his work and philosophical thought. Like many of his European contemporaries, Witkiewicz was a catastrophist, believing that the rising militarism of mankind boded ill for civilization. Unlike many of them who flirted with leftist political ideology, Witkiewicz dreaded what he thought was an inevitable social revolution and the triumph of "ethics" over philosophy and art.

The first years after his return to Poland in 1918 were hectic for Witkiewicz. By the early '20s he had sketched out his main philosophical theories, written some 28 plays (only five were performed during his life) and turned out numerous "pure form" paintings.

**Problems with purity:** But his lack of commercial success led Witkiewicz eventually to repudiate his purist theory as unattainable in practice—at least for himself. In 1924 he set up a one-man portrait company in Warsaw, selling portraits as commodities whose prices depended primarily on the time it took to complete them. Yet the portrait company also provided a framework for the artist's experiments with drugs and let him continue to pursue pure forms under their effects.

By the mid-'30s Witkiewicz had all but given up his artistic and literary pursuits. And on Sept. 18, 1939, the day after the Soviet invasion of Poland, Witkiewicz committed suicide, slicing his own jugular vein in a forest outside the town of Jeziory in what is now the Soviet Ukraine.

Witkiewicz is not exactly a Polish national hero. His suicide and Bohemian lifestyle would most likely pre-

clude that in staunchly Catholic Poland. Yet many Poles consider him something of a prophet.

On one of his last portraits, painted in 1938, he wrote, "To be exhibited at the next public showing of my work in 1955." He was not far off the mark. His paintings were banned during the early years of Communist rule in Poland. ("He was not exactly what the social realists wanted," jokes Zakiewicz.) And they were not displayed again in public until 1957.

Perhaps more significantly, his plays and futuristic novels, which often deal with life under totalitarian regimes, seem uncannily similar to later real-life Polish experience in the Stalinist '50s. His most famous play, *The Cobblers*, for example, written in the early '30s, concerns two successive revolutions, the first fascist, the second Marxist. For Poles, who suffered the horrors of the Nazi occupation from 1939 to 1945 and have still not completely rid themselves of Soviet domination, *The Cobbler's* plot is nothing short of eerie.

Zakiewicz maintains that too much is sometimes made of Witkiewicz' death. Rather than a grand political gesture, as his suicide is sometimes portrayed, she says it was more accurately a personal decision by the often-despondent artist that life would not be worth living under Soviet occupation. For some, the distinction does not seem important.

"You know, Witkiewicz committed suicide in 1939 because he thought the Soviet invasion meant the death of culture in Poland," explained a young visitor to the museum recently. "And if you look at what has happened here in the last 40 years, maybe he was right."

**Larry O'Connor** is a writer living in Oslo who recently traveled to Warsaw.

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## It's a real jungle out there in the art world

### Primitive Art in Civilized Places

By Sally Price  
University of Chicago Press  
145 pp., \$19.95

By Pat Aufderheide

**A** MAROON ARTIST USED TO SELL his works by the side of the road to the Suriname airport. (The Maroons of northeastern South America are descended from runaway African slaves.) Tourists kept asking him the ritual meaning of his decorations and seemed put out when he couldn't come up with any. So he bought a copy of an iconic dictionary written by an urban Surinamese giv-

ing fanciful "tribal" interpretations to designs the enthusiast had labeled "traditional." He copied the designs and let his customers consult the book. His prices rose impressively.

A related problem was encountered by author Sally Price and her anthropologist husband Richard Price when they mounted an exhibit of Maroon art in Suriname. Promoters were troubled by art that didn't look "primitive" enough: "Too much like Mondrian," one said about a tapestry. And museum officials were confused: was this art or was it ethnographica? Should it be stripped of context data that would impede a connoisseur's delectation, or should it be made a mere example of communal and ritual process?

Price's answer to them was: neither, thank you. She proposed instead something that is common sense yet, within the art world, rad-

### CULTURE

ical. Why not accept that we see art through cultural filters, and that "primitive" art is also produced within a shaping context? Then we could accept the need for information that values aesthetic as well as ritual and social process.

**Immaculate perception:** The inability of so many to accept that simple suggestion—a suggestion grounded in the anthropologist Marshall Sahlin's phrase that "there is no such thing as immaculate percep-

tion"—is the true subject of Price's book. A slim volume, it could be even slimmer if the author were more concise. (This book is by an academic, although it is not for academics only.) It also would be shorter if she included fewer reproductions of newspapers clippings and ads.

One could also wish the book were longer. It could be amplified, especially with conversations with curators and collectors to which Price frequently alludes but rarely quotes, and also with sample pieces of primitive art and critical studies of exhibits. One wishes for more examples like that of Inuit soapstone sculpture. (The new artform powerfully evokes parallels with modern sculpture, and no wonder: the Canadian artist who taught the Inuit this cash-economy survival skill revered Henry Moore.) But this kind of wish list, which grows the more you think about it, is one of the consequences of reading a book designed to raise doubts more than to provide answers.

Price wants us to question some of the most settled convictions of our Western art establishment: that good taste is a special gift, that it's enduring and applies across cultural boundaries. Which is related to the assumption that the field of aesthetics is a separate and superior realm of human activity, divorced from the realities of economics, politics and culture.

She is tilling well-worked ground, as she acknowledges. Price cites English critic John Berger and French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu thoughtfully, and she revisits some grand old names of anthropology, including Franz Boas and Claude Lévi-Strauss. Boas had argued at the turn of the century that one should focus on the artist, not the art object, when studying the artwork of cultures very different from ours.

She also points out that her work is part of a current trend in anthropology toward more self-reflexive studies. It is odd, therefore, that she does not discuss the work of James Clifford, since this premier exponent of reflexive anthropology has written brilliantly on art and anthropology and on our images of the primitive as reflected in museum exhibits. (His superb *The Predicament of Culture: 20th Century Ethnography, Literature and Art* [Harvard University Press] anthologizes several key articles.)

Still, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places* makes its own contribution, charting myths that muffle our recognition of an invidious relationship between the collectors and the collected.

**And I know what I like:** Price ingeniously tracks the rhetoric of connoisseurship, including the flutulent statements of Kenneth Clark

(*Civilisation*), and detects not only smug assurance but also a contradiction. Taste-making is a kind of innate skill, connoisseurs claim; yet somehow not all gifted people have the authority.

Especially not "primitives." Primitives are, according to received wisdom, valuable to us because they're more in touch with the elemental forces we've pasted over with neuroses. That's the Noble Savage good news. The bad news is that they're also in the emotional dark ages. Here, for instance, is Clark comparing an African mask to a Grecian sculpture: "To the Negro imagination it is a world of fear and darkness, ready to inflict horrible punishment for the smallest infringement of a taboo. To the Hellenistic imagination it is a world of flight and confidence." Their emotional backwardness is what makes it OK to patronize them.

Primitive artists, in this received wisdom, demonstrate their elemental nature by working in disgusting or horrifying materials like hair, gum and bone and by producing boldly sexual work. (Interestingly, collectors say that work having male sexual connotations sells much better than female.) These artists, collectors assure Price, have no ability to see their own works as art. Tribal artists produce ritually, for the collectivity, and are not recognized within their own groups for their individual creativity.

**The value of facelessness:** Price methodically undermines each of these myths and then shows how they shape the art world's categorization of primitive art. For instance, they justify wholesale robbery ("were it not for us their art would go unappreciated"). One extended quote from the diaries of a French art hunter in 1931 shocks for the brutal deception and callous theft it coolly recounts. The myths also justify a pedigree system through collectors, not creators. It's Nelson Rockefeller's name, not the aboriginal artist's, that matters for collectors and museums. And of course, these myths also create the distinction between "art" and "ethnographica."

Price does assume that the artistic impulse is universal, and that many, if not all, of the world's peoples have a realm of culture they think of as "art." But she argues that a particular aesthetic expression is part of a particular culture. The denial of that reality is, for her, a major ideological clue. To assume that "primitive" people lack artists and aesthetic judgments, she concludes, is to unthinkingly participate in cultural discrimination (which all too often is also racist).

Finally, Price argues, in a low but persuasive key, that reconsidering our relationship to "the primitive" is also to reconsider our understanding of art much closer to home. ■

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# Eyes on the Prize

Continued from page 24

community's complaints against police brutality.

**Getting the drift:** It is that same complaint that sparks the '65 Watts uprising that opens up the series' second segment. Entitled "Two Societies (1965-68)," the program jumps from Watts to King's ill-fated open housing campaign in Chicago, to Detroit's destructive summer of 1967. The thematic links between the events are not explored, however—other than the echoed charges of police brutality in Watts and Detroit—and a sense of drift sets in.

The segment also zeroes in on King's decision to aid the sanitation workers' strike in Memphis and examines the problems the civil rights leader had maintaining that campaign's non-violent character. By showing King's failure in Chicago and his troubles with the crowds in Memphis, the producers may have been noting the limits of his non-violent strategy in urban America. It's cer-

tainly clear that the blush on King's movement had begun wearing off by the time of his April '68 assassination in Memphis. However, in a later segment, the sense of grief following his death is made palpable by the producers in a masterful marshaling of images.

The rise of the Black Panther party is covered in the third installment, "Power! (1966-68)," and it's easy to see why these brash black Californians captured the hearts of young African-Americans nationwide. After years of watching non-violent black protesters offer their bodies to dogs, nightsticks and firehoses for the cause of racial justice, these black youths were ready for more assertive action. The Black Panthers filled that bill perfectly.

The third segment also covers the struggle for community control of schools in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Ocean Hill-Brownsville. The dynamics of that struggle involved issues—of community control, education and self-esteem—that remain bones of contention in school districts all over the U.S. The demands of those black

parents in that Brooklyn district are being echoed in school districts nationwide in various decentralization experiments.

Sandwiched in between the Panthers and Ocean Hill-Brownsville is an account of how the country's first big-city black mayor was elected in Cleveland. The producers no doubt sought to link the themes of political, educational and community power, but there is a lumpy, undigested quality to the footage.

One of the most effective segments is "Ain't Gonna Shuffle No More (1964-72)," which focuses on the enormous, trans-athletic appeal of Muhammad Ali, chronicles the 1972 National Black Political Convention in Gary, Ind., and recounts a protest at predominantly black Howard University. Unlike the others, the theme of this installment is hardly ambiguous. Ali's refusal to be drafted into a Vietnam-era military service, the Gary convention's assertive "black political agenda" and the Howard University students' determination to transform their school from a training ground for the black

bourgeoisie to a "relevant black institution" are strongly connected.

The Gary convention is a particularly important event in the history of the black movement. This gathering of black nationalists, Marxists, elected officials, community organizers and activists of various stripes represented a pivot point in the direction of the struggle. Many analysts point to the '72 convention as the beginning of the black political movement that increased the number of black elected officials from just over 1,500 then to more than 7,000 today.

"A Nation of Law? (1968-71)" recounts the government's counterintelligence attack on various black organizations and details the damage wreaked by such assaults. The segment takes an in-depth look at the Attica uprising and the brutal reaction to it.

In addition to its value as an African-American retrospective, *Eyes II* shines as a testament to the determination of one man—Henry Hampton—who overcame enormous obstacles to present a vision of history filtered through a black perspective. ■

## NOTEBOOK

### Fear in Chile: Lives Under Pinochet

By Patricia Politzer  
Pantheon, 245 pp., \$19.95

Starting a soup kitchen does not sound like a political act. But in Chile, ruled for the past 16 years by dictator Augusto Pinochet, resistance had to take subterranean forms, and even innocuous acts of survival took on larger meanings. Blanca Ibarra, a leader in an urban shantytown, explains that the kitchens "were considered anti-government organizations—the government thought they were an attack on their image."

Patricia Politzer, a Chilean journalist, has gathered the voices of Ibarra and 13 others into an oral history of what happened in Chile after the U.S.-supported coup toppled the freely elected socialist President Salvador Allende in 1973. Her speakers, who include a union leader, a priest, a retired colonel and the widow of one of Allende's Cabinet ministers, range across Chilean society, from torture victims to those who supported the military regime with varying degrees of

discomfort.

Most depressing are the frightened middle-class people who excused the military regime, despite their misgivings, because it seemed to protect their precious status and because, starting in the late '70s, it produced a short-lived mini-boom in consumer goods (financed by international bank loans the country will never be able to repay). The priest, Damián Acuña, compares the imported cars and televisions to the trinkets the Spanish conquistadors used to try to trick the region's original inhabitants out of their land.

This middle-class acquiescence meant more problems for the working class and others who resisted. The most unusual man in the book, a leader of the resurgent copper miners' union named Victor Lopez, wistfully explains how politics pulled him from spiritual contemplation and his love of classical music. "Unfortunately," he laments, "the fight we lead now, this savage fight, doesn't allow us to appreciate those things. Man also has a right to be emotionally

thrilled. He shouldn't always be enraged, fighting for a crust of bread."

Even after a civilian candidate won the recent elections, Pinochet remains the army commander, retaining at least some power under the constitution his regime drafted in 1980. As a result, Chileans like Victor Lopez are still not free to turn away from their rage.

—James North

### Mark the Music: The Life and Work of Marc Blitzstein

By Eric A. Gordon  
St. Martin's Press, 605 pp., \$29.95

From the beginning of his career in the 1920s until his untimely death in 1964, American composer Marc Blitzstein always seemed to have a brilliant future just ahead of him. Blitzstein's innate musical talent allowed him to conquer the techniques of European classical music (romanticism, 12-tone, Dada) as well as American popular idioms (Tin Pan Alley, jazz, folk) while still a young man. He worked with talents as diverse as Nadia Boulanger, Arnold Schoenberg, Leonard

Bernstein and Lotte Lenya.

Yet relatively few people are familiar with Blitzstein today, and the list of his recognized successes numbers three: the pro-union agit-prop opera *The Cradle Will Rock* (1937); the opera *Regina* (1949), based on Lillian Hellman's play *The Little Foxes*; and his translation of *The Threepenny Opera* (1954). Other than that, what went wrong? According to Eric A. Gordon's thorough and well-written biography, *Mark the Music*, part of the reason lies in two "handicaps" that probably complicated Blitzstein's existence more than they would today: he was a leftist (for many years a Communist Party member) and he was a homosexual.

Artistically, Blitzstein often painted himself into the corner in trying to maintain political

principles. He wanted to write music "for the masses" but refused to pander to them by imitating American popular styles. Blitzstein chose to write "message" music for musical theater, but his working habits were those of the solitary composer—frantically rewriting and reworking until well past the last minute.

Much of Blitzstein's output was incomplete or unsuccessful, mere one-performance ciphers. But along with his three clear triumphs, there are a few neglected gems, particularly choruses and songs, that deserve to be revived and remembered. Those who have the patience for Gordon's well-researched biography will gain a clearer understanding of this little-known genius' music and his place in the American arts.

—Allen Smalling

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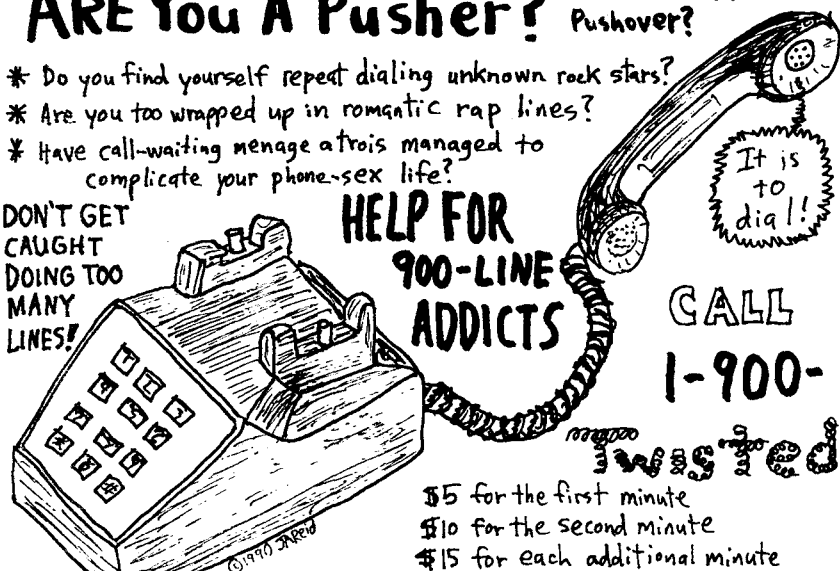
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# Election

Continued from page 11

Carter has also helped counter opposition charges of bias among the five-member Supreme Electoral Council, which a myriad of foreign observers have given high marks for overseeing the mechanics of the electoral process itself. Violence at campaign rallies has also been negligible since new police measures were adopted after a highly-publicized incident in early December when one person was killed (see story, page 12).

Carter's actions have helped dispel rumors that UNO was thinking of pulling out of the race at the last minute, fearing defeat. And while the "playing field" is certainly not entirely level, it may be impossible to expect more of a country still technically at war.

**The final stretch:** With new money in the campaign chest and Chamorro increasing the number of her campaign appearances,

UNO may make a final spurt in the last days of the race. Apart from the war, the debate over the economy remains a major issue. UNO has enlisted the support of Nicaragua's leading free-market economist, Francisco Mayorga, who has elaborated a special plan to "save" the economy within weeks of an opposition victory.

Amid the evidence that gut-level appeals may not be working, there are signals that Washington is preparing for a Sandinista victory. Secretary of State James Baker told a congressional panel that the U.S. could envision an improvement in relations with Nicaragua if the elections are judged to be free and fair. But he also raised the issue of Sandinista support for the Salvadoran guerrillas, making it clear that more is at stake than the long-stated goal of promoting "democracy" in Nicaragua.

As in 1984, there is a possibility that the U.S. will charge fraud. But to counter that,

hundreds of international observers are already on hand to watch every aspect of what is surely the most closely-watched election process ever. The U.N. and the Organization of American States alone will have more than 500 observers in place by election day.

Given the long, tortuous history of U.S.-Nicaraguan relations, the larger question of what comes next looms over the entire pro-

cess, particularly if the rest of the world verifies that the majority of Nicaraguans do, indeed, support the Sandinistas. Whatever the U.S. response, the 1990 electoral process already marks another major milestone for the Sandinista revolution. □

**David R. Dye** writes regularly about Central America. **William Gasperini** is *In These Times'* correspondent in Nicaragua.

## C A L E N D A R

Use the Calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$25.00 for one insertion, \$35.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of **ITT Calendar**.

### NEW YORK February 22-26

THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL  
PICTURE WINDOWS: CHANGING ROLES OF WOMEN IN SUBURBIA, a dinner-discussion-Elizabeth Ewen and Ros Baxandall; Thursday, Feb. 22; 7 p.m.; \$15.  
THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED-Augusto Boal; Friday, Feb. 23; 6-11 p.m.; and Saturday, Feb. 24; 11 a.m.-4 p.m.; 2 sessions, \$150.  
IN CONCERT: THE MOSAIC SEXTET-Saturday, Feb. 24; 8 p.m.; \$6.  
POETRY by R. Weiss, Cortland Jessup and LeRoy Gehres; Sunday, Feb. 25; 3 p.m.; \$6.  
POST-MODERNISM, IDENTITY POLITICS, AND THE LEFT-L.A. Kauffman and Kate Ellis, Monday, Feb. 26; 8 p.m.; \$5.

All events take place at the New York Marxist School, 79 Leonard St., New York, NY 10011, (212) 941-0332.

### CHICAGO February 25

For 40 years the journal *MONTHLY REVIEW*, founded by Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy, has represented independent and non-dogmatic socialist thinking. Readers and reporters of *MONTHLY REVIEW* in Chicago have formed a new discussion group, which meets at the New World Resource Center Bookstore, 1476 Irving Park Road. The group looks at a variety

of topics covered in the journal that are timely for socialists today. This month's meeting, held Sunday, Feb. 25 at 2 p.m., features the topic: "Media Bias—Techniques for Dealing with the Media" discussed by Alan Bickley, WBBM announcer, author and lecturer. Co-sponsored by the Open University for the Left and the New World Resource Center. For more information contact Perry Cartwright, 2620 Jackson Drive, Woodridge, IL 60517, (708) 971-2620.

### SAN FRANCISCO March 3-4

"OUTWRITE 90," the First National Lesbian and Gay Writers Conference sponsored by OUTLOOK magazine begins at 8:30 a.m. at the Cathedral Hill Hotel, located at Van Ness and Geary Avenues. Allen Ginsberg and Judy Grahn are among the many featured speakers. Panels and workshops include: the novel, poetry, non-fiction, genre fiction, the cross-over book, AIDS and the writer's responsibility, the economics of publishing, erotic writing, how to deal with writer's block, what sells, writing in the closet, censorship, how to give a good reading, and many more. Register NOW! For more information: OUT/LOOK-Conference, 2940 16th St., Suite 319, San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 626-7929.

### MINNEAPOLIS March 9-11

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### DENVER March 23-24

THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH LEGACIES OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS PRODUCTION. Physicians for Social Responsibility's National Meeting will examine the radioactive and toxic threats to our health and environment caused by years of nuclear weapons production. Speakers include Bernard Lown, M.D.; Alice Stewart, M.D.; and Charles Clement, M.D.. Norman Cousins is the recipient of the 1990 PSR award. For more information contact PSR, 1000 16th St. NW, #810, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 785-3777.

### WASHINGTON, DC March 24

Commemorate the assassination of Archbishop Romero and March to End the U.S. War in Central America. Assemble at 11 a.m. and march from the U.S. Capitol to the White House. A rally will be staged at the White House, followed by non-violent civil disobedience. Marches will also take place in San Francisco, Los Angeles and Austin, Texas. Co-sponsored by CISPES, SANE/Freeze, Nicaraguan Network, Pledge of Resistance, U.S. Student Association, United Church of Christ, Pax Christi USA, National Rainbow Coalition and many others. For more information, call (202) 265-0890, 328-4040 or 223-2328.

### ESTELI, NICARAGUA April 21-May 26

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# Mandela

Continued from page 7

tional press is dwelling on. The far right is capable of a certain amount of ugly murder and mayhem, especially as it can count on allies within the police force. But the international sanctions campaign has been effective beyond the dreams of its most optimistic supporters in convincing most whites that they have to concede at least something. Even the Conservative Party, which won a third of the vote in whites-only elections last year, has apparently abandoned hope of regaining control over the entire country and is now talking about geographic partition.

Years of struggle lie ahead. But for now, the world can marvel in awe at an erect old man who, after white people had confined him for 27 years, emerged and repeated, with obvious conviction, the words he had first voiced as a vigorous 45-year-old: "I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the idea of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities.

"It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die." □

**James North**, former *In These Times* correspondent in South Africa, is the author of *Freedom Rising*.

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**JEWISH CURRENTS,** February 1990 issue. "Black-Jewish Relations, 1990," editorial; "Reconciliation for America," Jesse Jackson; "Freedom Is a Long, Long Struggle," Cheryl Greenberg; "Pollard: A Jewish Spy Story," Harold Tickin. Single issue: \$2 plus 75¢ postage. Subscription: \$20 yearly (USA). **JEWISH CURRENTS**, Dept. T, Suite 601, 22 E. 17 St., New York, NY 10003.

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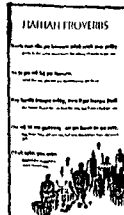
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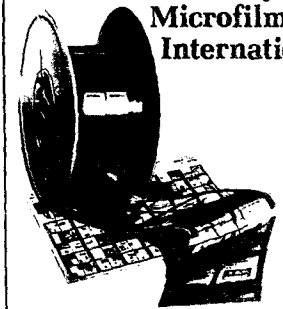


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An eloquent black nationalism: Malcolm X addressing a crowd in Harlem.

# Second Prize

By Salim Muwakkil

The footage of a 1964 speech by Malcolm X shown in the first installment of *Eyes on the Prize II* provided a glimpse of that slain leader's charisma and distinguished the documentary series from its predecessor. The first *Eyes on the Prize* series, aired three years ago on Public Broadcasting Stations (PBS), focused on the Southern-based civil rights movement and its heroic attempt to stand down the stark evils of racial segregation. *Eyes II*, also on PBS, veers from the moral certainties of that non-violent struggle to portray a movement bristling with competing voices and controversial ideas.

According to Henry Hampton, the executive producer of both series, the racial turmoil and militant rhetoric that characterized the era covered by *Eyes II* scared off some of the sponsors of the first series. Perhaps because of that lack of financial security, the second series has a slapdash quality. The editing is choppy and the subject matter often incongruously sequenced. Press reviews of the entire eight-part series were unavailable even after the fourth installment aired.

But these are minor failings in the face of Hampton's

overwhelming triumph. *Eyes II* is an extraordinary chronicle of the African-American struggle from the mid-'60s through the mid-'80s, (the series is halfway through its initial run). The documentary's narrative flow is directed by the producers' informed black perspective; the series thus depicts events and portrays characters traditionally left off the stage of mainstream civil rights history.

**Ignored footage:** What's more, the series tells the story of the '60s from the black side of town; most retrospectives of that turbulent decade tune in to the anti-war and countercultural movements that captured so much media attention in those days. Because of the producers' determination to present footage routinely ignored by other chroniclers, it's a safe bet that most white Americans (and a considerable number of black Americans) know little about many of the events covered in *Eyes II*. A few critics have complained, in fact, that some of the material selected is a bit too esoteric. By and large, though, the series' panoramic sweep is anchored by events of high historical significance.

"The Time has Come (1964-66)," the series' first installment, reveals how Martin Luther King Jr.'s non-violent modus operandi was wearing out its welcome with the younger members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). The coverage of King and the depiction of his good-natured differences of opinion with young turk Stokely Carmichael—who then was leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)—is invaluable footage, not only in its portrayal of the two men as personalities but also for the way it illuminates the divergent strategies they embodied.

For sheer historic audacity the series also captured footage documenting the only personal meeting between King and Malcolm. In the segment it's made clear that Malcolm understands his symbolic value as a more frightening alternative to King's tactics of moral suasion.

What is not made clear, however, is Malcolm's contribution to an incipient black nationalism that the series takes up in earnest in later installments. The former spokesman for the Nation of Islam (NOI), who left that group to form his own before he was assassinated in 1965, had an influence that was pervasive throughout the black movement. Although the series notes his influence on the activities of SNCC, it fails to identify Malcolm as one of the prime movers in black America's turn toward Africa.

The segment makes clear that the first of the so-called "long hot summer" rebellions occurred in Harlem in 1964 following the shooting death of a black teenager by a police officer. Indeed, one of the series' most poignant revelations is the constancy of the black

Continued on page 21



Sanitation workers strike in Memphis shortly before Martin Luther King's assassination.